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MAZADA TOURS

Scores said killed by Oklahoma City car bomb



A side of the government building in downtown Oklahoma City lies in ruin following a massive car-bomb explosion yesterday. At least 17 children in an employees' day-care center were among the dead. (Reuters)

OKLAHOMA CITY — A car bomb ripped a nine-story hole in a downtown federal office building yesterday, killing at least 78 people, including 17 children, and wounding hundreds. Other victims were still trapped in the wreckage late last night. There is not yet an official toll.

Paramedic Heather Taylor said 17 children were dead at the scene. Earlier, officials had said at least two adults were killed.

"It was like Beirut; everything was burning and flattened," said Dr. Carl Spengler, who arrived about five minutes after the blast.

Floors caved in from the top to the bottom of the building. The north side of the building was gone. Burning debris and burning cars lined streets.

People frantically searched for loved ones, including parents whose children were in the day-care center. Downtown business stopped as other buildings were evacuated.

At one emergency center, a medical worker told KWTU television that only two of 80 people found in one search of the building had survived. That report was not confirmed.

In Chicago, meanwhile, the Nation of Islam denied news reports it had any role in the deadly blast. As of last night no group had claimed responsibility.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation issued an alert for three suspects, according to local tele-

vision station Channel 8. It said the FBI issued an alert for a brown Chevrolet pickup truck with tinted windows containing three male passengers. Two of the passengers were said to have dark hair and beards.

One of the passengers is said to be 20 to 25 years old and the other 35 to 38 years old, the station said. A description of the truck driver was not available.

"Nothing is being ruled out," an FBI official said when asked if the blast was being treated as a possible terrorist attack. The official said the FBI's counter-terrorism experts are involved in the investigation.

He also said the bombing occurred on the second anniversary of the disastrous FBI raid at cult leader David Koresh's Branch Davidian compound in Texas, and could be linked to that.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin sent a telegram to President Bill Clinton offering any assistance that Israel can provide. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres sent a telegram to US Secretary of State Warren Christopher expressing his condolences at the attack and saying that the Israeli people "is with you in this tragic hour."

The blast at the Alfred Murrah Building, similar to the terrorist car bombing that rocked New York's World Trade Center two years ago, happened just after 9 a.m., when most of the more than 500 federal workers were in

their offices.

Mayor Ron Norick called it a car bomb, and said it left a crater 2.4 meters deep.

"It's just body after body after body in there," one rescuer said.

The explosion could be felt kilometers away. Black smoke streamed across the skyline, and glass, bricks, and other debris were spread over 10 blocks.

The bomb was perhaps 450-540 kilograms, about the same size as the one that shook the World Trade Center, said John Magaw, director of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Bureau.

After the explosion, emergency crews set up a first aid center nearby, and some of the wounded sat on the sidewalks, bloodied on their heads or arms, awaiting aid. St. Anthony Hospital put out a call for more medical help, and at midday officials posted a list of more than 200 wounded.

President Clinton directed that emergency federal assistance be offered to local authorities.

Deputy Fire Chief Jon Hansen said at early afternoon there were still people alive in the debris. He said workers tried to reassure the trapped workers that "we're doing everything within the good Lord's power to reach them and get to them. It's going to be a very slow process."

Federal buildings in Boston, Nebraska, Oregon, and Delaware were evacuated following the explosion in Oklahoma City, because of telephoned bomb threats and complaints of office tampering.

Jordan blasts Israel over refusal to sign NPT

MARILYN HENRY
NEW YORK

ISRAEL'S "intransigence and reluctance" to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is impeding confidence-building and could "deepen psychological barriers among people and states in the region," Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdel Kabari told the UN conference on renewing the treaty yesterday.

It would be "very difficult to convince the peoples in the region of Israel's credibility, seri-

ousness, and desire for just, durable, and comprehensive peace" if Jerusalem does not sign the treaty, he said. But Kabari did not indicate how Jordan would vote on extending the treaty.

Syria will not agree to an extension of the NPT unless Israel signs the pact and submits its facilities to international inspection, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara told the conference. In a speech largely devoted to

(Continued on Page 2)

Opposition, Shetreet condemn Peres remark

DAVID RUDGE

FOREIGN Minister Shimon Peres's statement this week that was taken to mean the government would consider a withdrawal on the Golan to international borders was blasted yesterday by both the opposition and a member of the government.

Likud leader MK Binyamin Netanyahu charged that Syrian President Hafez Assad is not only holding out for all of the Golan, but also wanted a piece of the Galilee.

Economics Minister Shimon Shetreet said that Peres does not have mandate from the Labor

Party to offer such a concession. "If he intends to give this message, then what's left for us to give if we return to the international border?" he said on Channel 1.

(Continued on Page 23)

Information released on jailed Soviet spy

JACOB DALLAL
and Tim

THE High Court of Justice yesterday removed a publication ban on information pertaining to a Soviet spy who operated here for 15 years before his arrest and imprisonment in 1988.

Gregory London, 67, is currently serving a 13-year sentence imposed by Tel Aviv District Court. Some details of the case were released for the first time yesterday, when the court accepted a petition

by Meretz MK Dedi Zucker to disclose the names of the seven people imprisoned secretly.

According to the information released, London is believed to have passed information on the Merkava tank and other sensitive material to the Soviets. He also gave the KGB information on

members of the Israeli intelligence community.

London came here in 1973 in the guise of a new immigrant, during a wave of immigration from the Soviet Union. He was recruited and trained by the KGB before coming, and was provided with equipment to relay information he gathered.

A pilot in the Soviet air force (Continued on Page 2)

Concern over influx of Coptic pilgrims

HAIM SHAPIRO

REPRESENTATIVES of the Christian communities held an emergency meeting yesterday over fears that the unexpected arrival of thousands of Coptic pilgrims for Easter could result in riots in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

According to the Uri Mor, director of the Religious Affairs Ministry (Continued on Page 23)

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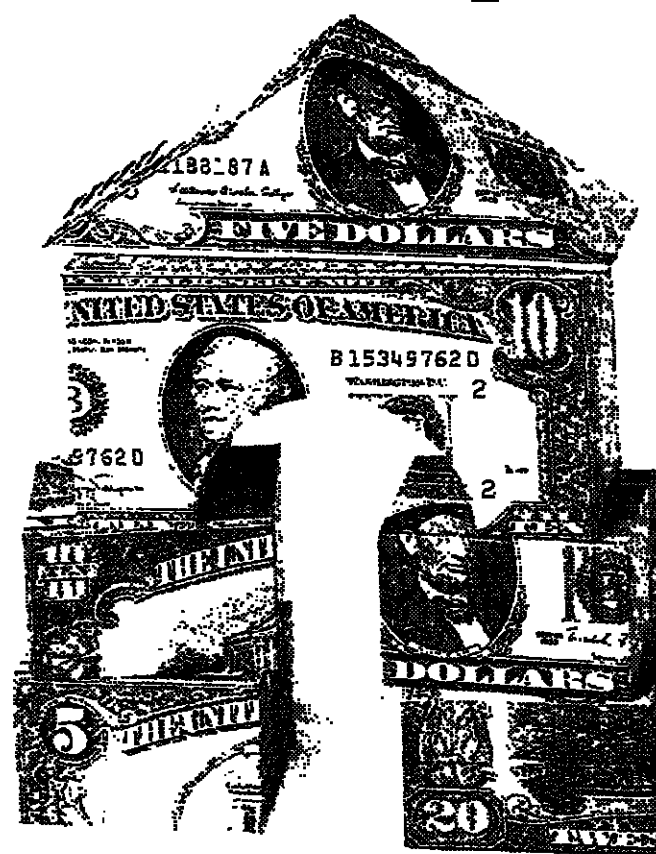
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Kahalani wants High Court to clear way for Golan bill

LABOR MK Avigdor Kahalani yesterday said he will petition the High Court for the right to present his Golan Heights bill in the Knesset, following the statements on withdrawal made by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

The bill demands that at least 70 MKs be needed to change the 1981 law which effectively annexed

the Golan to Israel, and more than 50 percent of those eligible to vote in the event of a referendum.

The Labor faction recently denied Kahalani's request to present the bill, and Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss (also Labor) has said he cannot technically grant Kahalani floor time in the plenum without faction approval.

"I now have no choice but to petition the High Court. It's the most natural step," Kahalani told Army Radio.

He said he has so far refused Likud offers that he present the bill during its floor time, maintaining that he was voted into the Knesset as a Labor MK and wishes to fight for the bill within the party whose elec-

LIAT COLLINS

tion platform included remaining on the Golan Heights.

He did not however completely rule out the possibility of using Likud time, should the High Court rule against him.

"I hope and believe I can remain in the party, but I will do everything possible to block withdrawal from the Golan Heights. I see that as my duty," he said.

Regarding the Third Way, a political but non-party movement he helped found to support of remaining on the Golan, Kahalani said: "I expect there will be a question mark

about it becoming a political party for the 1996 elections, but we're not discussing it at the moment.

"It is a political movement which thousands are joining to show the existing government that the path it has chosen to follow is dangerous and could endanger their existence in the future."

Kahalani said that if Labor does

not stick to its platform, he would have to consider his steps during the next elections.

"Either I'll take my wife around the world and leave the political scene, or I'll decide to remain in politics and find myself another way in which to have influence. But I won't sit on the fence and not do what I promised."

Third Way founder: Movement may be turning into a party

DAVID RUDGE

THE head of the Third Way movement, veteran Labor Party member Yehuda Harel, said yesterday that the supposedly apolitical body was heading in the direction of becoming a new party.

Harel, who founded the movement primarily to fight against any withdrawal from the Golan Heights, told *The Jerusalem Post* that he favors turning the movement into a political party.

"There are many members and supporters who believe and say we should become a party, but there are others who are opposed to such a move," said Harel.

"We haven't debated the matter seriously yet and I don't expect it to come up for discussion in the next month or so because not everybody is in favor of the movement becoming a party."

"Nevertheless, it seems to me that we are moving in that direction and, if or when the matter is brought up for discussion and a decision, I believe the majority would be in favor."

Harel maintained that if the Third Way were to run in the next elections as an independent party it would be "one of the big three."

The movement was established about a year ago to promote what its founders described as the Labor Party's centrist position — keeping control over the Golan, the Jordan Valley, and greater Jerusalem, including Gush Etzion and Gush Katif, while opposing continued rule over the Palestinians.

Harel roundly denounced the comments made by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres Tuesday in an interview on Channel 1 in which Peres intimated that the government would be prepared for a withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the international border.

Harel described as "cheap demagoguery" Peres's remarks referring to the Levi Eshkol and Menachem Begin governments having talked about the international border.

He said the Eshkol government had taken a decision regarding a possible withdrawal to the international border in return for peace with Syria but that this decision had later been rescinded.

Furthermore, he maintained that Peres's comments were not a slip of the tongue but had been coordinated with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Amman, PA resolve row over Hamas

News agencies

THE Palestinian Authority said yesterday it had settled a row with Jordan over charges that Amman was harboring the "practical leadership" of Hamas.

"There were some misunderstandings, and we resolved them through direct diplomatic talks between us ... There is no problem now," said PA Information Minister Yasser Abed-Rabbo.

"Jordan is not a place for Palestinian opposition, and we will not tolerate any action or matter that could harm the Palestinian Authority," Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister Abdul-Raouf Rawabdeh added.

Both men were speaking to reporters after a scheduled meeting of a Jordanian-Palestinian committee supervising the implementation of six cooperation pacts signed in January.

Rawabdeh, who headed the Jordanian side, and Abed-Rabbo said the talks were suspended after a single round.

"The achievements so far are not up to the levels that we aspire to. But there is a long way ahead, and there

are obstacles in implementing the agreements," said Rawabdeh.

Earlier, officials from both sides said agreements on economic affairs, trade, finance, transport, telecommunications, health, and education could be concluded during the talks, scheduled to last two days.

Meanwhile, Hamas militants said in a leaflet they would not surrender weapons or stop attacks against Israel. The leaflet was issued after reports that a deal was being worked out between Hamas and Yasser Arafat to end the attacks.

Officials in Arafat's self-rule government met several times over the past few days with Hamas leaders to head off a confrontation and reach an understanding.

Arafat spokesman Nabil Abu Irdeineh said some progress was being made.

"There are positive signs, and they are talking in a different language these days," Abu Irdeineh said. "We are encouraging them, and we are waiting for them to join us and to respect the signature of the PLO [on the peace accord]."

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

The monthly luncheon of SKAL CLUB TEL AVIV will take place on Sunday, April 23, 1995, at the Tel Aviv Sheraton at 1 p.m. Guest speaker: Mr. Dan Gillerman, Chairman, Israel Chamber of Commerce.



Evelyn Galinski Hecht, daughter of the late Heinz Galinski, yesterday drops a scroll into the cornerstone of the training center which is named for her late father, former head of Germany's Jewish community, at Nurim Youth Aliya Village near Hadera. The community funded the center and the new Borchardt campus at the village. In the background are (from left) Inge Borchardt of Berlin, Eli Amir, director-general of Youth Aliya, Norma Drinner of Berlin, and Yehiel Leket, chairman of Youth Aliya. (Joe Malcolm)

SPY

(Continued from Page One) and an engineer by profession, London joined an IDF weapons unit and passed on information on Israeli military technology and know-how to the Soviets.

He continued spying after he left the IDF, until he was caught in 1968.

"They called him the master spy," said Arye Kamar, who defended London. "The charge against him was that he did serious damage [to Israel]."

London confessed to the charges against him, but the court ruled that a spy of his stature probably committed much graver offenses than those he was tried for.

The sentence was light because London was in poor health. Three years ago, London appealed his sentence to the Supreme Court, but the appeal was rejected. London's apparent motivation

was money. The KGB would forward him undisclosed sums until his arrest. London claimed he acted because of KGB threats to harm his family in Russia.

London's uncle, who lives in Israel along with other members of his family, expressed surprise at the disclosure.

"Several years ago they told me he was being treated for some contagious disease and that was the last I heard," Meir London told Israel TV last night.

London is also believed to have been connected with two other Soviet spies, Shabtai Kalmanovich and Roman Weissfeld.

The disclosure comes on the heels of reports of a three-way spy swap between Israel, Russia, and the US, in which Jonathan Pollard would be freed.

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Participating in the pact entails non-nuclear-weapons states to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Observers said Shara's statement to the month-long review and extension conference had

been expected. However, they were taken aback by the harshness of Kabarty's speech.

Kabarty said that while the NPT had stopped the nuclear arms race between the superpowers, this was not true on the regional level. The so-called threshold states have aggravated the problem, "because the acquisition by these states of nuclear weapons represented a strong incentive to other neighboring states to seek to acquire nuclear weapons," he said, citing the Middle East as an example.

"Israel's accession to the treaty would mitigate the regional arms race and release huge financial resources spent on armaments and redirect them into economic and social development," Kabarty said.

The US is insisting on an indefinite extension. US Vice President Al Gore told the conference yesterday that any alternative to an indefinite extension would create uncertainty and suspicion among states that would threaten the NPT's objective of disarmament.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa is to address the conference today.

No. 2 man in Japanese cult held

TOKYO, (Reuters) — The number two man in a doomsday cult linked to last month's lethal gas attack on the Tokyo subway was arrested yesterday, police said. A police spokesman identified the man as Kiyohide Hayakawa, 45, and described him as deputy leader of the Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth) sect.

Lugar throws hat in ring

INDIANAPOLIS, (Reuters) — Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar, best known as an expert on foreign policy, yesterday became the eighth Republican to enter the 1996 presidential race. Lugar, aged 63, is highly respected in Washington, especially for his expertise on foreign policy. But he is little known outside his home state.

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Health accord signed with Egypt

JUDY SIEGEL

HEALTH Minister Ephraim Sneh yesterday signed the first cooperation agreement in the field of health between Egypt and Israel.

Sneh, who completed a two-day official visit to Egypt as a guest of Health Minister Ali Abdel Fattah, said he regards the accord as a "breakthrough" in relations between the two countries.

According to the agreement, medical experts and information will be exchanged, and Israeli and Egyptian scientists will cooperate on joint research projects. Until now, the Egyptian medical association has boycotted Israeli professionals and institutions.

Sneh, who on Tuesday was received by President Hosni Mubarak, also met with officials of the Egyptian Health Ministry and the national authority for research and pharmaceutical regulation.

He also visited the Elharam Hospital and donated two Israeli-made incubators to its neonatology department.

Yesterday, he opened an international pharmacology conference in Cairo, along with Fattah and Egypt's science minister.

Prankster sends Herzliya to police

A TEENAGE prankster from Herzliya called 16 residents of the town early Monday morning, and told them they were required to come to the local police station immediately for questioning.

He did not specify why or about what their testimony was required, but hinted the matter was extremely sensitive and urgent.

Several of those he called appeared at the police station, where the duty officer was amazed to hear their story and sent them home.

With the help of Bezek, police located and arrested the caller, also from Herzliya, who made the calls from his family home. The 17 year old said he had played the practical joke out of boredom.

(Itim)

Gang of teenage thieves broken

BILL HUTMAN

A GANG of five 14- and 15-year-olds, who broke into dozens of Jerusalem schools, welfare offices, and medical clinics to steal equipment, has been uncovered by police.

Three of the youths were detained earlier this week. Two others, whose identities are known to police, remain at large.

The youths allegedly stole televisions, computers, videos, and other electronic equipment, and then sold them. None of the five has a criminal record, according to police.

The investigation began after a school principal complained about a break-in, which led to the arrest of a suspect, 14, who was detained Sunday. The suspect confessed to 30 burglaries and identified other gang members.

NEWS IN BRIEF

3 killed on the job
TWO foreign workers and a local resident were killed yesterday afternoon in two separate work accidents. In Rehovot, a roof collapsed on a Russian and a Romanian construction worker, killing them instantly. At a Tzrifin piping factory, a worker was killed when a tire blew up in his face. Police are investigating both incidents.

Zealot leaflet: Kill GSS head
A leaflet distributed in Kiryat Arba yesterday to people who passed the grave of Baruch Goldstein called for the murder of the head of the General Security Service.

The leaflet, signed by "David's Sword," gave a name and address for the GSS head, facts which cannot be legally published. It called on all those who "burn with the zeal for God and for whom Jewish blood is precious" to act in accordance with what is written "to remove this disgrace from the Jewish people" and to strike "at him and all the other evil Hellenistic persecutors known as the leftist leaders." (Itim)

Tunisian official meets Tibi in Jerusalem
A senior Tunisian official visited Jerusalem yesterday and met with Dr. Ahmed Tibi, an adviser to PLO leader Yasser Arafat.

Said Ben Mustafa, Tunisia's secretary of state for North African Affairs, arrived in Israel from Jordan on Tuesday and toured the autonomous areas. "We discussed ways to strengthen the relationship between Tunisia and the Palestinian authority," Tibi said after the meeting.

World Earth Day this Saturday
Israel will mark World Earth Day on Saturday. Although most Western countries have been marking April 22 as an environment awareness day for 25 years, Israel has only begun celebrating it in the past few years. Green Action will hold a huge carnival at Tel Aviv harbor from 4 p.m. to midnight.

Number of non-Jewish immigrants from CIS is said to be 17%

Uri Gordon: Amend the Law of Return

BATSHEVA TSUR

THE number of non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union is growing, the Absorption Ministry spokesman confirmed yesterday.

But, he said, most of those classified by the Interior Ministry as "non-Jews" either had Jewish fathers or grandfathers, although halachically they are not Jewish. Others are married to Jews.

According to the Absorption Ministry's estimates, some 17 percent of the immigrants who arrived since 1989 are "non-Jews," spokesman Amnon Be'eri said, far short of the estimates of 30%-40%.

Be'eri said the ministry does not keep a breakdown of the numbers of non-Jews, but that it is clear that those who came earlier in the aliya wave were closer to Judaism and Zionism than many of those who came later. It therefore follows that the percentage of non-Jews among the olim was increasing.

"They are, in fact, part of the Jewish people and should be given the conditions to be so, including religious rites such as marriage and burial," he said.

He was commenting on a report in yesterday's *Ha'aretz* that of 557,370 immigrants who had come from the CIS since the end of 1989, some 110,300 are not classified as Jews.

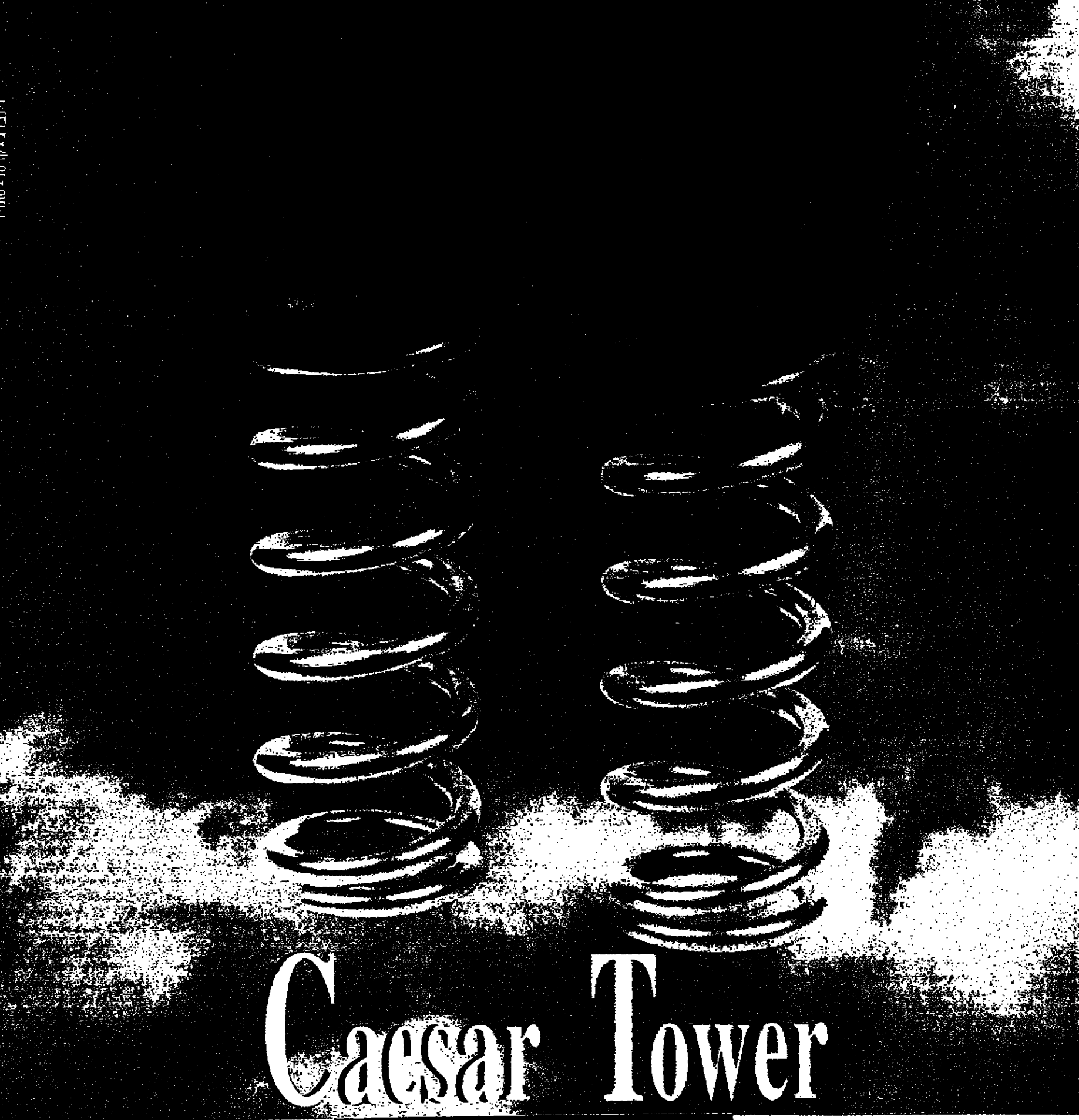
The number of mixed marriages in the former Soviet Union stands at more than 50%.

Jewish Agency Aliya Department head Uri Gordon yesterday evening repeated his call to amend the paragraph of the Law of Return which allows those with a Jewish grandfather to make aliya.

"Many of the non-Jews who come here do not agree to convert to Judaism," he said, "and I am less than enthusiastic about bringing non-Jews here for fear of changing the Jewish character of the state. I believe we should only bring first-degree relatives who are non-Jewish."

At the same time, Gordon said, the religious authorities and first and foremost, the Chief Rabbinate, should show sensitivity to the needs of non-Jewish family members who are living here. They should make conversion procedures as simple as possible, he said.

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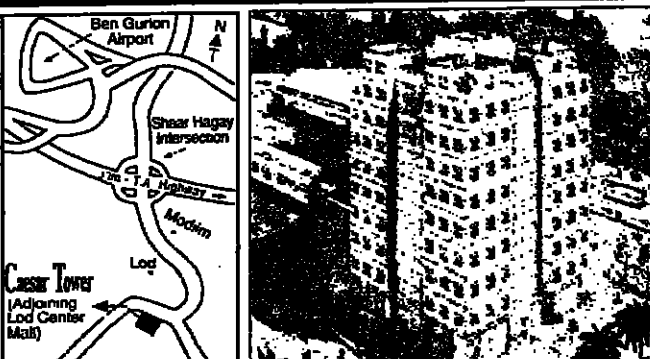
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The PA-Hamas negotiations

THOSE who have been expecting the Palestinian Authority to crack down on Islamic terrorists have been largely disappointed. More than half the operatives who were detained immediately following the Gaza suicide bombings have been released, and there has been no attempt to disarm the military cadres of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Instead, the Palestinian Authority has been conducting negotiations with the Islamic groups, which many believe will decide the fate of the Oslo agreement. If as a result of these talks the Islamic militants join the process and disavow terrorism, the agreement's prospects will improve. If the talks fail and terrorism continues, public support for the agreement will wane to the vanishing point.

But before assessing the prospects of these talks, it is essential to realize what they are about. The PA representatives are not demanding that the Islamic groups put an end, even temporarily, to the "armed struggle." They are only asking that the war against Israel not be waged from bases in the self-rule areas. This is precisely what they agreed on when the PLO leadership first assumed power in Gaza and Jericho. It was a division-of-labor agreement, which made sense to both sides: if terrorist attacks were launched strictly from areas under Israeli control, the Islamic groups would reap the glory and prestige such attacks accrue, while the PA could not be accused of failing to combat terrorism, and Yasser Arafat could claim that the sooner he takes control of the rest of the territories, the sooner terrorism would subside.

It is entirely possible that the reason Hamas and Islamic Jihad have broken this agreement is that the closure has made terrorist operations in Israel more difficult. But it is more likely that the ease with which Israelis can be attacked in the Gaza District has proved irresistible. Yet neither the breach of the PA-Hamas agreement nor Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's warning that continued terrorism would delay the implementation of the next phase of the agreement have prompted Arafat to condemn the armed struggle. The debate among the Palestinians is strictly over venue and tactics.

Undoubtedly, some of Arafat's lieutenants would prefer to have all terrorist operations cease for a while, in the hope that this would effect a quick Israeli withdrawal from Arab population centers in Judea and Samaria. But there are others, like Abbas Zakki, a member of the Fatah Central Committee, who believes that

the terrorist strikes help advance the process. In an interview earlier this week with the London-based Arabic paper *Al Hayat* he said, "The recent military operations reinforce the Oslo agreements and the Palestinian position. It will be dangerous to stop these operations, because the agreements will collapse if Israel has no incentive to make progress." Zakki also asserts that disarming the Islamic organizations is impossible and suggests that only a dialogue can "put order into internal matters" among the Palestinians.

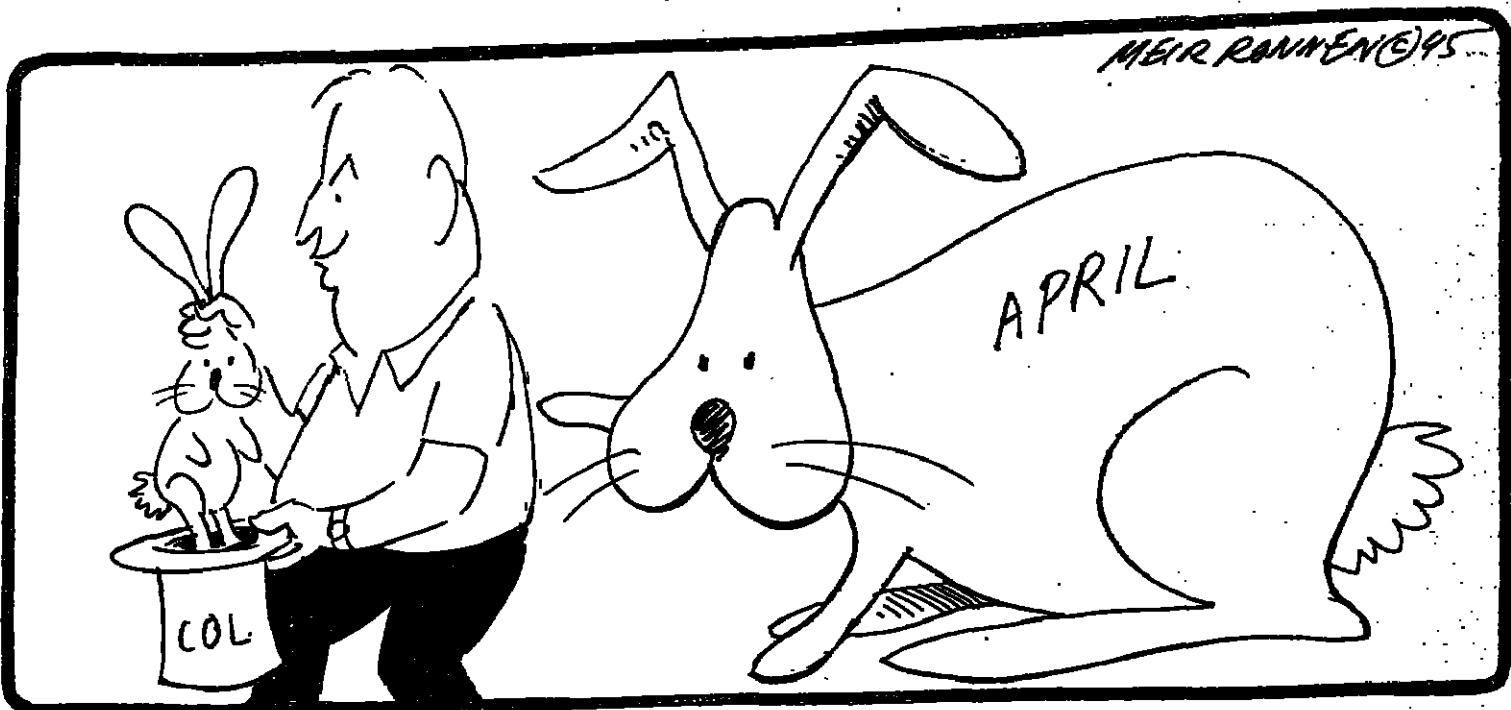
Clearly, the PA does not share Rabin's view that "unless it eliminates the mad murderers of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, it will become their victim." The notion that negotiations with a democratic adversary should be accompanied by "military operations" is common to all dictatorial regimes, and the PA is no exception. The principle also guides the Syrians, who employ Hizbullah as their military arm.

Only with this in mind can the implications of the negotiations between the PA and Hamas be understood. Neither Arafat nor his Hamas interlocutors are remotely inclined to renounce the armed struggle. If an agreement is reached to curb terrorist activity, it will be limited to action from bases in Gaza and Jericho. It is also likely that the PA, desperately in need of foreign aid and investments, will continue to have its secret police throw some bones in the direction of Israel's security services by informing on some wanted Islamic terrorists. This assures Israeli lobbying for such aid in the US and Europe.

But even the staunchest supporters of the Oslo agreement now realize that if an agreement between Arafat and the Islamic groups to curb terror is reached, it will not be because the PLO feels bound by its commitment to combat terrorism. Nor can there be any doubt that if a lull in terrorist activity persuades Israel to withdraw from Judea and Samaria, every Arab town and village in these areas will turn into another "hotbed of terrorism," as OC Southern Command Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz described Gaza last week.

The gamble Israel took in negotiating with Arafat was based on the assumption that he would change, that he could turn from a terrorist chieftain into a statesman. It is enough to hear his recent speeches to Gaza audiences, in which he glorifies the "shahids" of Islamic Jihad, and declares "We are all seekers of martyrdom" to realize that the expectation of a personality metamorphosis on his part is no more than a foolish indulgence in wishful thinking.

March hare



Peace: A strategy, not a gamble

YA'ACOV CHISDAI

IS peace a strategy, a religion, or a gamble? When the peace process began, it had something of all three.

The premier and foreign minister executed a brilliant maneuver against Arafat, catching him in a moment of crisis and weakness, and obtaining things from him that he hadn't been prepared to give earlier.

That was strategy. They promised a "New Middle East," and these promises were like visions of redemption. When they had to explain the risks, they said it was a chance that had to be gambled upon.

But now, the peace process has entered a crisis. Already it is impossible to grasp both ends of the stick.

What is "the strategy of peace?"

That's something we could learn from Syrian President Hafez Assad. For him, they say, peace is a strategy - in other words, an overall plan for achieving national aims.

If peace is a plan, then it can be altered, or given up. And clearly, in carrying it out, there is no bar to using other means, for example, bleeding us as much as possible in Lebanon to advance the strategy of peace.

But what is the religion of peace?

It is a dogmatic position that establishes goals, means and the value of facts according to the tenets of the faith. Believers tend to proclaim (for instance, when there is a terrorist attack) that it strengthens their faith in the need to dismantle settlements.

What's the connection? There isn't any. But the believer molds his interpretation to suit his faith.

And how does one gamble on peace? A gambler who starts losing usually doesn't stop; he is sure he has another chance. As his losses mount, the more he feels

the need for another round, when everything will turn out all right.

There are clear signs of this among our statesmen today. One more chance, one more throw, and we'll finally be able to break out of the circle of hatred. Just one more, and another... Till, finally, there'll be nothing left to lose.

We could go on arguing about the peace process and its future, but the religious basis and the tendency to gamble must be erased at all costs. Peace must be a strategy, not more.

Today, such strategic thinking leads to a central conclusion: The "peace is security" formula has been finally rebuffed. The terror attacks and murders show there is

achieve peace. A further conclusion is that neither the will nor the ability of Arab leaders to prevent terror can be relied on.

We had hoped that Yasser Arafat would impose order in Gaza, and now we're arguing over whether he wants to but can't, or can but doesn't want to. Similarly, we hope that when peace comes, Assad will subdue Hizbullah. But that, too, is no more than a wish.

All this is to say that Israel must reserve itself the freedom of action to defend its citizens and its security, without any connection to agreements or international norms. It is inconceivable that the Oslo agreement should provide more immunity for the

grave and perilous mistake.

The final conclusion is that the war on terror must be defined as the supreme and primary mission. The premier and defense minister and IDF commanders must from now on pursue one goal: the stamping out of terrorism.

This isn't easy - but it's what must be done. The peace ceremonies, contacts and discussions can be left to the foreign minister and his cohorts. There's no more time or room for compromise.

It's doubtful whether soldiers should have been transported the way they have been up till now; but tomorrow it will be criminal. If ditches need to be dug along the highways, let them be dug; if bypass roads need to be constructed, let that be done. Every living thing should be kept half a kilometer from both sides of the highways. It must be done, and now.

If we have to go back into Gaza to pull out the murderers, we should have no inhibitions. And if the need arises to pepper armed Hamas men with machine-gun fire, then it must be done - on the ground and from the air, and wherever they are to be found. Arafat needs to be more protected than King Hussein was 25 years ago.

Needless to say, these aren't miracles cures. Even strategy needs the accompanying wisdom to know when to strike at the terrorists' nests, but also how to find ways to strengthen those who stand by us.

But we have a serious problem with wisdom, and not just vis-à-vis the Palestinians.

We lived in security, without peace, for many years. It was hard, but possible. But with peace and without security we cannot live.

(Courtesy of Ma'ariv)

What was a mistake yesterday, will be a crime tomorrow

no link between agreements and security.

Agreements can be fine, and the intentions of those who signed them serious, but in a region where hatred of the West and faith in Islam are deeply rooted, we shall long continue to be targets of terror and sabotage, even if there is no direct military threat.

And we cannot live with this terror, although it's true that it isn't war, and cannot conquer the State of Israel. But it can defeat Israel's citizens, their security, their faith, and their determination. And that kind of defeat is the most dangerous.

THUS THE strategic conclusion is that the war against terrorism must precede the effort to

Gaza Strip than Jordan or Egypt had when they allowed *Jedeyeen* units to operate from their territory. Still another conclusion is that terror is too dangerous: a serpent for us simply to wait till it strikes, or to hide from it behind fences or a separation line. Military experience, from the Maginot Line to the Bar-Lev Line, proves that no line is unbreachable or uncrossable. So our thinking and our efforts should be split equally and rationally - beginning with the serpent's lair, where the terrorist snake prepares his operations, and up to the last line of defense in every neighborhood and street.

This approach makes the enormous and exclusive investment in building a line of separation a

The alternative to 'wasted time'

DAN LEON

fense Minister Rabin seems to be having increasing doubts. No wonder then, that in the wake of the monstrous and inhuman acts of terror by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, public doubts over the Oslo accords are on the increase.

Rabin seems to remain unimpressed by Shimon Peres's opinion that "anyone who links personal security with the peace process will have neither peace nor personal security"; and by the statement of MK Nissim

He recently implemented the present closure policies, with their disastrous effect on the Palestinian economy; and now he sanctions continued building in the Jerusalem area and the West Bank (6,500 units according to the housing minister's proposal).

Perhaps in his heart of hearts, he believes that Israel's security demands an IDF presence on the West Bank.

Now with an honesty worthy of a better cause - and to make sure

How Rabin might win the peace and the next elections

Zvilli, secretary-general of his own party, following a meeting with Arafat at the end of March, that "I was positively surprised by the readiness of the Palestinian Authority to prevent terror, for they understand that terror endangers the peace process."

Neither does Rabin appear to share US Vice-President Al Gore's view that there is no foundation to accusations against the Palestinian Authority that it is not restraining terror.

RABIN IS frank and consistent. As Mr. Security, he refused in the 1970s, during his first stint as prime minister, to talk to the PLO. In 1992 he tried to crush the intifada by force. Last year he refused to remove settlers, even from the heart of Hebron after the massacre there (while denying that "political settlements" had any security value).

that Israelis, Palestinians and the world get the message - he says on Israel TV that "If the Palestinians would agree to accept a Palestinian state in Gaza alone, and to forsake Judea and Samaria, there would be something to talk about."

The Oslo accords leave the discussion on permanent solutions for problems like Jerusalem and Palestinian self-determination to the last stage of the negotiations, but Rabin is already making clear - in word and deed - how he

envisages the future.

If the prime minister believes that security means retreating from the letter and the spirit of Oslo, he can hardly expect to retain much credibility with his Palestinian negotiating partners. In that case, the peace process will die and Hamas will celebrate victory.

But, from the political-security aspect, there is an alternative to what from the peace perspective amounts to "wasted time." That is to push ahead with the interim agreement at all reasonable speed, indicating at the same time that at the end of the road, a Palestinian state will arise in the West Bank and Gaza (with or without a confederation with Jordan).

This latter concept has broad public sympathy in Israel and implications for the Palestinian people as momentous as was statehood for Jews nearly 50 years ago.

Whatever the risks involved in this sort of bold leadership, it offers a possibility of winning both the peace and the approaching elections. The alternative could endanger both. Now is the time for Rabin to make the choice.

The author is a Jerusalem writer and editor

POSTSCRIPT

AFTER 632 lessons and 17 years of trying, British curate David Guest has finally passed his driving test.

"When I was told I'd passed, I bent down on my knees and

thanked God," he said. Guest, 33, spent £5,000 pounds on lessons, tried eight different instructors and crashed five cars. He said his main problem was mixing up the clutch and the brake.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NOTRE DAME AND THE HOLY SEE

Sir, - Msgr. Dr. Mathes's letter of April 5, "Jerusalem, city of peace," attacking *The Jerusalem Post* March 9 editorial "Eight churches vs. Israel," didn't appear to me to square with the stance of the Vatican even though it was signed "The Charge of the Holy See Jerusalem." So, on April 6 I faxed an inquiry to Archbishop Andrea di Montezemolo, Apostolic Nuncio to Israel. He faxed back the same day saying Msgr. Dr. Richard Mathes's full title in English is "Charge of the Holy See for the Pontifical Institute 'Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center,'" that "The abbreviation 'The Charge of the Holy See' is misleading," and that "Msgr. Mathes was expressing his personal opinion and not that of the Holy See."

To the non-specialist, either title means that Msgr. Dr. Mathes officially speaks for the Holy See. His letterhead is as follows: Line 1: "Pontifical Institute"; line 2: "No-

tre Dame of Jerusalem center"; line 3: "The Charge of the Holy See." The most reasonable reading of this combination is that the first two lines specify the address (no other location information is given) and that "The Charge of the Holy See" is Msgr. Dr. Mathes's title.

I am not knowledgeable about the Roman Catholic system of nomenclature, but it is quite evident that in this instance, which relates Israel to the Pontifical Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center, it is misleading. The center which Msgr. Mathes heads is a prominent activist center for Palestinian-Israeli issues. Although it may well consider itself to be moderate and even-handed in the quest for peace and justice and so serves the best interests of both Palestinians and Israelis, it is widely regarded as heavily tilted against Israel. Given the Center's identification as "Pontifical" and Msgr. Dr. Mathes's title "The Charge of the Holy

See," it is reasonable to assume that the Center's activism is consistent with that of the Holy See.

I appreciate and respect the wide latitude within the Roman Catholic Church for individuals and organizations to publicly express opinions and conduct programs which might be at odds with the outlook of the Holy See. But it is reasonable to expect a "Pontifical Institute" whose head is titled "The Charge of the Holy See" to be in conformity with the Holy See. Otherwise, the Holy See might well be perceived as having two policies towards Israel: one at the highest political level exercised by the Apostolic Nuncio to Israel and another enacted on the ground by activists and programs emanating from the Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center.

Jerusalem. JOSEPH LERNER

THE TOURIST RIP-OFF

all our previous tourism ministers encouraging mainly five-star hotels to be built, and almost ignoring the three-star market which is the backbone of European tourism. Next, the notorious "extras": the coffee and croissant in a five-star hotel reaching in some cases \$13 and similar highway robbery in respect of drinks.

And now comes the latest case of allowing nearly all our four- and even five-star hotels to replace all their Bezek tele-card operated public phones with the privately operated coin (not token) ones. Let's take the Hyatt Regency in Jerusalem, which had four Bezek phones and now has the coin ones which do not allow overseas calls, make it impossible to receive a call from abroad, do not give change and refuse to recognize all and any foreign or local phone cards. A complaint to the Tourism Ministry finally produced an answer: they have taken it up with the Knesset and one of the Knesset committees is dealing with the matter, so let's wait for the outcome. And in the meantime not only the foreign tourist comes us, but we, too, curse the hotels that have become so greedy. Add to all this some of the amazing cases of our cab-drivers' imagination in charging

dollar fares where shekels are listed, etc. - and the explanation is there for all to see why the Israeli tourist finds it cheaper and better to go to Turkey (flight included) than to an Israeli hotel, and why our 2-million-a-year tourist "record" remains unchanged.

Ramat Gan. THEODORE LEVITE

THE ORATION OF PERICLES

Sir, - The political dilemma in which Israel finds itself this day is a replica of the crucial position which the ancient Republic of Athens faced during the Peloponnesian War. The Oration of Pericles to the Athenians should arouse all Israelis to the peril of forgetting their own history.

His words of warning were not successful in averting the danger which eventually destroyed the people of Athens as a free and democratic nation. Pray that Israel can learn from this tragedy. Pray that this lesson of history will be learned in time.

JACOB S. FEYNMAN, M.D. Manteo, North Carolina.

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Take a look at the map

ABBA EBAN

FROM the dawn of its independence, Israel has combined its quest for statehood with a large vision of regional harmony. The idea of living as an embattled and isolated ghetto was never a part of its aspiration. At the peace conference in Geneva in 1973, where Israeli and Arab ministers sat at the same table for the first time, I stated with cabinet authority:

"The ultimate guarantee of a peace agreement lies in the creation of common regional interests in such degree of intensity, in such entanglement of reciprocal advantage, in such mutual accessibility, as to put the possibility of future wars beyond rational contingency."

At Casablanca in 1994, cabinet ministers from Israel, Jordan, the Palestine Authority, Egypt, Morocco, Qatar and other Gulf states discussed regional cooperation with leaders of banking and business from Middle Eastern countries, the US and Japan. On April 10 the continuation of the Casablanca Conference took place in Amman.

For most of the 27 years since the Six Day War, all Israeli policymakers have regarded open boundaries with a free flow of people and commerce as the test of authenticity for Arab claims of peaceful intent.

With startling abruptness, a confrontation has now been created between the idea of an open region and the rival theory of "separateness." A fence is being constructed. There are plans for rigorous and restrictive border controls. An intricate road network is under construction to ensure separate movement of Israelis and Palestinians. We read of measures such as the use of horses and dogs to make the separation as hermetic as possible.

The unexpected spokesman of the new separation is Shlomo Avineri, a scholar with important experience in diplomacy. He argues that the European analogy is not relevant, since the EU economies do not reflect such vast disparities as that which exists between Israel and Gaza. This is the least serious argument of the separation school, since those of us who have used the European metaphor have done so exclusively to describe the art of reconcil-

ing sovereignty with community obligations.

A graver consideration is that Arab workers toiling at low wage levels would create "a new Bantustan." The remedy would be to adjust the status and wage levels of foreign workers for good Israeli reasons, and not only in response to the Bantustan prospect. It is also true that Arab states are already reacting suspiciously to what they fear would be a new dependency with Jewish hegemony and neo-colonialism.

Avineri's cure is a total transition from the traditional quest for regional community to a docile acceptance of an Israeli isolationist role.

"Keep the two entities as far apart as possible, politically and economically." "Good fences make good neighbors." The Palestinians should have "as few links with Israel as possible." Israel should keep "a low profile." Money for the Palestinian "ent-

The separation idea is a sheer impossibility

ty" should come not from the US or Israel or Europe or - heaven forbid - from the World Bank, but from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who figure for the first time as candidates for organized international generosity.

If the proposed change of regional policy would prevent suicide bombings, the argument would be decisive, but no one, including Avineri, can offer such a guarantee. The question is whether the revision of a deep-rooted Zionist ideal must proceed as a response to the initiative of Moslem fanatics who have killed Israelis and themselves in a mad pursuit of the Koranic paradise.

The answer lies in the sheer impossibility of the separation idea. One look at the map destroys the myth. There is no Sinai buffer here. There is a pattern of proximity and interconnection so intense and pervasive that it even defied the state of war between Jordan, the PLO and Israel so as

to create an overflow of movement, previously in one direction and, since the Jordanian treaty, in an eastward direction as well.

The expert Israeli reaction to the story of barbed-wire fences, artificial roads, barking dogs and entry permits has shown Israeli skepticism in its best, realistic light. For good or ill, in present sickness or in ultimate health, Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians are committed by geography and history to accept their proximity as a common fate.

There are so many Palestinians and Jordanians who have already awakened to this reality that it would be hysterical for Israel to accept the Hamas dictate as its own law.

Some alleviation could come from a more cautious rhetoric. To offer Israeli membership of the Arab League is like promising your neighbor that you propose to move into his living room at the earliest possible date. Even the Egyptian treaty allows and does not forbid mutual entry between the two countries, and Israel would probably have refused to sign it if it forbade contact. We would certainly not have accepted a Jordanian treaty if it had endorsed the "separation" principle.

It is probable that the separation myth will fail and that the open-region ideas already advocated by the US, the EU, the UN agencies and the Casablanca and Amman conferences will be restored.

It would be a mistake to take long-term decisions based on short-term emergencies. The loss of life is tragic and demands strenuous suppression, but it is immeasurably less than what would ensue from a collapse of the peace process. Our losses were most numerous by the thousands when Israel was in occupation of the entire area from Golan to Suez.

The background must include the consciousness that Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority are exchanging words, arguments and cooperative actions, not shells and missiles. This is not yet the new Middle East, but neither is it the old one.

The writer is a former foreign minister.



Alisa's last journey, and beyond

MEIR INDOR

ALISA, let me apologize on behalf of all the Israelis who wanted to bid you farewell on your final journey, but couldn't because the authorities made little mention of your funeral.

Only three Jerusalemites stood by your side, your coffin standing desolate on a small cart behind the aircraft, enveloped in smoke from the roaring engines, as passengers boarded the plane to celebrate their Pessah vacation abroad.

We stood there for an hour. Even seasoned photographers, those who claim to have seen everything, were struck by the near-surrealistic scene.

Then your father arrived, his muscular form racked with sobs, accompanied by a minor official and three IDF Chaplaincy Corps soldiers. Together with the mechanics and the photographers, we managed to assemble a quorum and recite Kaddish.

I would never have dared consider disturbing your repose were this scene not typical of the new wave that has swept over our country. Today, columnists shape an elitist "public opinion" that minimizes the importance of funerals, and decries those who upset the equanimity of Israeli living-rooms by recalling blood-drenched images of slaughter and the anguished cries of the bereaved.

When an IDF chaplaincy soldier traditionally asked forgiveness from you on behalf of the

military burial society and the authorities, I thought how fitting it would be to have IDF representatives and Israel government officials standing by your coffin.

But they avoid attending funerals. All they can say is that "the long arm of the IDF will apprehend the perpetrators," when it is clear to us all that the IDF's "long arm" has been cut short by the Oslo agreement.

What could they say to your father, a true Zionist who sent his daughter to Israel, believing that our army defends its people? The IDF, too, no longer lives up to its reputation. Instead of waging war against terrorism, its senior offi-

in urgent need of organ transplants.

I didn't tell your father about the many phone calls I had received as Chairman of the Terror Victims Association, nor about those reported by your community in New Jersey, asking that you be buried here, in the Holy Land that you loved so much. The decision of your immediate family clearly took precedence over my own wishes and those of your extended family, the people of Israel.

IN THE next world, you will meet the real salt of the earth of the Jewish people, at the Mar-

I stood by your coffin, and felt a wave of emotion that defied expression

cers have become deeply enmeshed in politics and in meetings with terrorist leaders, whom they equip with weapons.

I explained to your father that although only three people had arrived, many more would have wanted to be there, that the entire nation was behind us.

You made a valuable contribution to this country, spending a year of your life in Israel rather than at a prestigious American university. Even after your death, you continued to contribute by granting new life to those

tyrs' Seder held before the Divine Throne.

Tomorrow, Miriam the Prophetess and her handmaidens will dance before the Creator, celebrating our redemption at the parting of the Red Sea on the Seventh Day of Pessah.

You will be there as the most recent terror victim, joining other students, soldier Iris Azulai, stabbed to death in Jerusalem about two years ago, and Iris Asraf, slaughtered at the age of 20 by a coworker for whom she made coffee every morning.

Your table will also be graced by children like 10-year-old Rami Haba, whose head was crushed and his body hidden in a cave; the infant son of the Haran family from Nahariya, tossed onto the seashore rocks by Yasser Arafat's henchmen after they shot and killed his father. Joined by a million young Holocaust victims, they will ask the Four Questions.

And I, the son of Auschwitz survivors, a veteran soldier twice wounded by terrorists, have other questions for the Creator.

Why have 137 Jews been slaughtered since the Oslo agreement? Why has the age-old order been upset in our land? How has it come to pass that on this Pessah holiday, there are Jews who feel that we are in Egypt again, with the mentality of slaves, mesmerized by an alien culture that seeks to negate all that God has helped our glorious nation accomplish over the past few years?

Why are Jews who represent formerly Zionist parties calling for the amendment of the Law of Return, and cabinet ministers seeking to eliminate the words "within a Jewish soul" from the national anthem, in deference to the sensitivities of the Arab minority?

How far will destiny take us from this Pessah to the next?

The writer, a lieutenant-colonel in the IDF reserves, is Chairman of the Terror Victims' Association.

Green and red lines

YECHIEL LEITER

DURING an interview outside Kfar Darom after last week's suicide attacks in Gaza, Prime Minister Rabin proffered the view that some consolation may be found in the fact that "the terrorists did not carry out their attack inside sovereign Israel." This statement reveals much about where government policy is headed.

Separation has been the panacea of the Rabin government since the Beit Lid massacre in January. The separation plan, it is purported, offers a new direction for the country - a solution desperately needed to deal with the suicide bombings carried out by the "enemies of peace."

But what is really new about the separation suggestion? Separation has been the strategy of this government from its inception. Isn't the settlement freeze in Judea, Samaria and Gaza and the "new order of priorities" the beginning of separation between Judea, Samaria and Gaza and pre-1967 Israel? What is the Oslo process if not separation between Arabs and Jews?

However, it is apparent that the post-Beit Lid separation plan does indeed portend the implementation of something new. It is not only the separation of Judea, Samaria and Gaza from the rest of Israel, or the separation of Jews from Arabs; it is separation between Jews and Jews - specifically between the Jews of Judea, Samaria and Gaza and those of little Israel.

The Beit Lid massacre was a watershed for the Rabin government. It simply could not remain in power if the country's soft belly were to remain so vulnerable. Because an acknowledgment of failure is not on the cards, a

change in policy had to be found which would, on the one hand, not jeopardize the process already begun, but on the other hand would put an end to - or at the very least mitigate the frequency - with which the suicide bombers were hitting the country's center.

THE SOLUTION was found in separation. Separate - so the message went out to the other side - Jews living and soldiers operating in Judea, Samaria and Gaza from the rest of Israel. If the suicide attacks continue where they hurt most, the red line will have been crossed, and the game will be over, the Arabs

The government has no mandate to divide the people of Israel

were told. Indeed, after Beit Lid, the negotiations were clearly frozen, even if they were not formally thus declared by the government.

But our national policymakers indicated to the Palestinian Arabs that attacks inside Judea, Samaria and Gaza would not be considered as "over the red line," and would not draw the same response. Calls to halt the process would not be made with the same intensity, and could therefore be ignored.

This policy pattern isn't new. It was borrowed from the South Lebanon paradigm. Operation Accountability let Hizbullah, the Lebanese and the

Syrians know that incessant Katyusha attacks on civilian centers in Galilee would be considered a red line which, if crossed, would trigger an unequivocally potent response.

The American-brokered negotiations after the operation, though, saw Israel allowing for attacks against its soldiers in South Lebanon, pledging from the outset that these would not draw the same response.

The value of our soldiers' lives in Lebanon was "separated" from that of those south of the border.

Rabin's statements, repeated by rote after each attack, that he is more responsible for the welfare of 98 percent of the public who live in sovereign Israel than the 2 percent who have chosen to live in Judea, Samaria and Gaza isn't just an impetuous self-justifying retort. It's government policy.

Whether the Rabin government has a mandate to divide the land of Israel is debatable. But one thing everyone should agree on: He has no mandate to divide the people of Israel. And that is what separation amounts to.

The writer is executive director of the foreign desk of the Yeshiva Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.



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Gas causes panic at Japanese railway station

News agencies

YOKOHAMA — PANDEMONIUM erupted at Yokohama's main train station yesterday when a mysterious gas spread through an underground corridor, sickening hundreds of people.

Police said they were treating the lunchtime incident as a "criminal case involving bodily harm" but ruled out the involvement of sarin, used in last month's poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway which killed 12 people and injured 5,500. Police suggested it might be a copycat.

Thousands of commuters raced out of the station, crowding sidewalks and streets. Sirens wailed and at least 10 helicopters circled overhead.

Police, firefighters and chemical weapons experts — some in gas masks — checked the station for the source of the foul chemical odor. The National Public Safety Commission chief said the air smelled like sulfuric acid.

Police said fumes were released almost simultaneously in one carriage of a train and in an underground passageway at Yokohama's main railway station at about 1 p.m.

Yuka Takaoka, a college student, said she saw firefighters clad in protective gear gingerly removing 20 or 30 small cardboard boxes from the station. They warned people to stay away, but did not explain what was inside, she said. Kyodo News Service said a white liquid was found in a corridor.

A military poison gas warfare unit was sent to the area and prepared to spray neutralizing chemicals. Officials said sarin, the nerve gas used in the Tokyo attack, was not suspected because victims' symptoms were different.

Since the March 20 attack, daily revelations of terrifying discoveries at properties belonging to the main suspect — a religious cult — have kept up the tension.

The cult, Aum Shinri Kyo, has denied any involvement in last month's attack, and in yesterday's as well.

Authorities believed the Yokohama attack was deliberate, but named no suspects and no one claimed responsibility. Police said it appeared different enough from the Tokyo attack that it may have been committed by a copycat.

At least 297 people were taken to hospitals when they complained of stinging eyes, coughs and dizziness after smelling a foul chemical odor at the train station, police said. There were no reports of serious or life-threatening injuries.

Takashi Nemoto, who runs a small shop in the train station, said people suddenly began running headlong out of the ticket gates. "They were all holding their noses and shouting 'it



Japanese women cover their mouths as they try to catch their breath after inhaling a gas at Yokohama railway station yesterday. (Reuters)

smells," he said.

Passenger Kiyoko Amano told NHK, Japan's public broadcasting network, that he suddenly felt a stinging feeling in his throat and then started coughing when he was walking in an underground passageway in the station.

Other people also began coughing at about the same time. "I still feel dizzy and sick," he said.

Yokohama's 507 schools were ordered not to let their 300,000 students go home until it was

certain they would be safe.

On March 5, two weeks before the Tokyo attack, about a dozen passengers were taken to a hospital in Yokohama after they inhaled mysterious fumes in a train car and complained of eye and respiratory pain. The source of the fumes was never found.

Separately yesterday, some passengers aboard a train that passed through Yokohama at about the same time as people were racing out of the station complained of sickness and were

taken to hospitals. That train was taken out of service and inspected but nothing suspicious was found.

Train officials said a faulty air conditioner might have been responsible. But the Transport Ministry ruled that out as a cause of the station poisoning.

The Aum cult became the chief suspect in the Tokyo attack after police found tons of dangerous chemicals at its facilities. No one has been charged directly with the subway attack.

Spanish opposition leader escapes death in bomb blast

MADRID (Reuters) — Basque separatists struck at the top levels of Spain's political establishment yesterday with an unsuccessful car bomb attack on opposition leader Jose Maria Aznar in Madrid.

The conservative Popular Party chief escaped with minor cuts from the morning rush-hour blast, saved by the armor plating of his car, which was virtually destroyed. Aznar is the most prominent political figure targeted by ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom) since it killed dictator Francisco Franco's prime minister, Luis Carrero Blanco, with a bomb that blew his car onto a rooftop in central Madrid in 1973.

Police said 15 people were injured by yesterday's bomb, made of 25 kg of explosives, which rocked a northeast Madrid residential quarter just after 8 a.m. Three were seriously hurt. A 75-year-old woman, crushed by a wall falling on her while she slept, was in critical condition.

About an hour later police and firefighters rushed to the scene of a second explosion near a railway station in northern Madrid. They said the car bombers had apparently blown up their own getaway car and no injuries were reported.

A Popular Party spokesman said the car bomb was detonated when Aznar's official car was at an intersection on his way to par-

ty headquarters in the centre of the city.

"It went off beside the engine of the car. Cars alongside burst into flames. A piece of shrapnel smashed into the door where Jose Maria Aznar was sitting."

"He was saved by the armor plating. That's 16 tonnes. What did these barbarians do that could lift 16 tonnes at least a little bit into the air?" the spokesman said.

Aznar, with a little blood on his face, walked unaided into a nearby clinic for preliminary treatment. He was later transferred to another hospital for observation but was due to be released yesterday afternoon.

Russians retreat from Chechen village

News agencies

RUSSIAN troops have been forced to retreat from the Chechen village of Bamut, just one day after taking the rebel stronghold, because of heavy shelling from the surrounding hills. Interfax news agency said yesterday.

It quoted Col.-Gen. Mikhail Yegorov, acting commander of Moscow's operations in the Chechnya region, as saying the Russian troops had forced out rebel fighters on Tuesday but had later come under fire from hills which they had failed to take.

"Russian troops were later forced to leave the village to avoid casualties," Yegorov, who is temporarily standing in for Col.-Gen. Anatoly Kulikov as head of the joint army and interior ministry operation, told Interfax.

The retreat appeared to deal a blow to Russian efforts to completely control all of the fertile and industrially developed areas of northern and central Chechnya.

Kulikov, who is briefly resting

in Moscow, told a news conference earlier yesterday that the Russian troops had forced the last rebel fighters out of Bamut.

Bamut is the last lowland rebel stronghold. Most rebels fighting for the southern Russian region's independence from Moscow are now in mountains in southern Chechnya.

Kulikov said yesterday that 80 percent of Chechnya was now under Russian control, but insisted he was under no pressure to end the conflict before President Clinton's visit next month.

"Given the fact that we are in control of most parts of the territory, we can say the bulk of the outlawed armed formations in Chechnya have been destroyed," Kulikov told a news conference.

Kulikov said only 7,000 supporters of rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev remained in Chechnya, and only 3,000 were militarily trained and equipped.

"I think Dudayev does not

have the social or economic base to continue fighting," Kulikov said.

The general said he was under no pressure to end the war before the arrival of Clinton and other Western leaders for Victory Day in Moscow on May 9, marking the end of World War II.

There have been widespread reports President Boris Yeltsin wants the conflict to be over so the celebrations begin without Chechnya clouding the festivities.

"There has been no pressure from the government. We have received no decrees from the commander in chief, the president," Kulikov said. "I have not received such a command."

Kulikov said the war in Chechnya was entering a new stage, and the conflict will soon shift away from the military offensive and focus on political reconstruction. "I think a new stage has come, that of political efforts," he said.

Serbs seize weapons, pound Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (AP) — Bosnian Serbs raided UN weapons collection sites and, ignoring UN warnings, used artillery to pound the city yesterday.

As Serbs began to set up the mortars at the UN heavy weapons collection site in the Serb-held suburb of Ilidza, Ukrainian peacekeepers fired four warning shots, said UN Lt. Col. Gary Coward.

The Serbs ignored the shots and fired six shells. At a nearby weapons-collection point in the suburb of Osijek, Serbs fired four rounds from a 105-mm artillery piece, Coward said.

The attacks, combined with a standoff over the safety of UN flights to and from the battered Bosnian capital, show the increasing contempt for the UN presence in Bosnia and its helplessness.

Also yesterday, a UN plane en route to Sarajevo was forced to turn back after Bosnian Serbs noted it was carrying civilians and said they could not guarantee the safety of the plane. UN officials said it was the second flight diverted in as many days.

UN officials said they would suspend all flights to Sarajevo if Serbs refuse security guarantees for planes carrying civilians.

All heavy weapons have been banned within 20 km of Sarajevo since February 1994 under the threat of NATO retaliation. Weapons were to be withdrawn or put under UN control.

There are ten UN collection sites in and around Sarajevo, nine with Serb weapons and one for guns belonging to government troops. Serbs are permitted to maintain the weapons. There have been repeated instances of Serbs either taking weapons out of the sites or firing them where they are.

This incident was the gravest since a truce took effect on January 1. In the absence of a political settlement, both warring sides are gearing up for bigger battles when it expires May 1.

Coward acknowledged that UN officials were "in a dilemma" over the violations of the weapons exclusion zone.

The UN requested NATO air strikes several times last year. But UN officials are increasingly reluctant to do so fearing retaliation against peacekeepers. Last November, dozens of peacekeepers were detained by Serbs to deter further strikes.

The fighting subsided only when NATO jets buzzed the area.

Libyans, defying UN, take off for pilgrimage

TRIPOLI (AP) — A Libyan airliner took off yesterday on a flight carrying Moslems to Saudi Arabia in defiance of UN sanctions banning international flights.

With shouts of "God is greater than America," the passengers jabbed their fists in the air as they boarded the white Libyan Arab Airlines Boeing 727.

Some feared what might happen to them for challenging an air embargo imposed by the UN Security Council. But neither neighboring Moslem nor Western states have threatened any action.

Ironically, the flight took off only hours before the UN Sanctions Committee approved Egypt's request for an exemption to allow Egyptian planes to fly pilgrims from Libya. The Libyan airlines flights apparently would not be covered under that.

Wrapped in the white robes of Moslem pilgrims, hundreds of Libyans and other Africans had waited since Tuesday night at the airport about 30 km outside the Libyan capital.

Between 7,000 and 10,000 pilgrims will leave for Mecca in the coming days, said Saad Mujber, secretary of foreign affairs of the General People's Congress.

"This is not animosity or defiance to anybody. We are solely exercising a religious duty. This is a divine order by almighty God," Mujber said as he joined pilgrims boarding the plane.

The plane, with a Libyan flag painted on its side, carried 150 people. It was to land in Jeddah. It was not known whether the airliner would fly over Egypt or Sudan. Egyptian and Sudanese civil aviation officials said they had received no request yesterday for Libyan overflights.

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi vowed he would start the

flights Tuesday but apparently delayed while Egypt tried to work out a diplomatic solution.

Backing the challenge to the three-year-old embargo, Libyan television showed the pilgrims at the airport chanting "Holy war" and "God is great like a hurricane that destroys imperialism."

Gaddafi has regularly blamed the "imperialist" US for the sanctions and described the UN Security Council that adopted the measures as Washington's tool.

The sanctions — which also include a ban on arms sales and a downgrading of diplomatic links — were imposed to force Gaddafi to turn over two suspects in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people died.

Libyan officials said another flight might leave later in the day. A second Boeing 727 was on the tarmac. Libyan Airlines, deprived of spare parts under the UN embargo, has a working fleet of five 727s, three in Tripoli and two in Benghazi, Libyan officials say.

Gaddafi's plan to fly the pilgrims put the neighboring Moslem states in the embarrassing position of either blocking the pilgrims from their religious duty or violating the sanctions.

The Saudi interior minister, Prince Nayef ibn Abdel-Aziz, said yesterday his country is bound to "welcome any Moslem who comes to visit the House of God" — meaning Mecca. But he steered away from questions on how the Libyans would get there.

Gaddafi has twice before used the pilgrimage, or "hajj," to publicize his anger at the sanctions. Last year he organized a camel caravan to Mecca and in 1993 — despite Gaddafi's enmity for Israel — Libyan pilgrims visited Moslem holy places in Jerusalem.

Insults fly as French election campaign turns nasty

PARIS (Reuters) — The French presidential election campaign started to turn nasty yesterday.

Four days ahead of first-round voting, the rival conservative camps of Prime Minister Edouard Balladur and Paris mayor Jacques Chirac traded charge and countercharge with a new level of venom.

Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, a Chirac supporter, accused Balladur of waging a hate campaign against Chirac while Balladur said he feared his rival's campaign promises would leave voters frustrated and angry.

"It is not normal for things to have taken this turn, which is

almost hateful," Juppe told France-Inter radio.

"If Mr Balladur spent one-tenth of the energy fighting (Socialist candidate) Lionel Jospin that he spends attacking Jacques Chirac, he would have a better chance of reaching the second round," Juppe said.

"We should not deceive, we should not create illusions," Balladur said on RFI radio. "The most important thing is that the French people do not end up saying after the election, 'I was tricked.'"

In the event no one wins a first-round majority, a run-off will be held on May 7 to elect a successor to Socialist Francois Mitterrand, who steps down

next month after 14 years in office.

Juppe, tipped as Balladur's possible successor as premier if Chirac wins, said Balladur was deliberately misrepresenting Chirac's words on wage demands and economic policy.

"Mr Balladur is using arguments in bad faith," he said.

In a questionnaire on their personal secrets published in the weekly L'Express magazine, Balladur boasted he knew how to make strawberry ice cream and cheese fondue while Chirac acknowledged hating opera and Jospin conceded he had no savings.

Chirac said he sleeps only four to five hours a night, swears by classy Guy Laroche suits and has a penchant for the poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire and Paul Verlaine.

Television westerns and animal shows are favorites of Balladur, an amateur Scrabble player and has a horror of being late for appointments.

Iranians determined to buy reactor

NEW DELHI (AP) — US attempts to block Iran from buying a nuclear reactor showed "injustice and discrimination," and Iran is determined to acquire atomic power, Iran's president said yesterday.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani also said he expected Russia to resist the "slander and insult by the Americans" who were trying to stop the sale, and he repeated his accusation of double standards in Washington.

Rafsanjani spoke at a news conference a few hours after President Bill Clinton strongly objected to plans by Russia and China to sell nuclear technology to Iran.

Clinton said in Washington he would be "quite aggressive" with Russian President Boris Yeltsin to cancel the sale when he goes to Moscow next month.

"So far, we have found the Russians strong and steadfast," Rafsanjani said at the end of a three-day state visit to India.

"We know that the Americans will exert their pressure. But Iran is determined to have the construction of the nuclear power reactor for peaceful purposes," he said through an interpreter.

"Again, we can see a sign of injustice and discrimination to be shown by the United States," Rafsanjani's remarks, showing no softening toward the United States, was the latest in a series of mutual recriminations this week.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Monday accused Iran of continuing to support international terrorism and urged China to scrap negotiations to sell Tehran two 300 megawatt water reactors.

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THURSDAY APR 20 1995
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News in Focus

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1995

The barbecue brigade fought for beach space

Holidaymakers left the bustle of the cities to create traffic jams at the nature reserves. Liat Collins followed some of them to the Dead Sea



WHAT did people do over Pessah? They ate out. Out in the hills, parks, forests and beaches. Anyone who still believes that the majority of the population left the country for the vacation obviously didn't try to find a parking spot near any of the country's nature reserves. Local tourists took advantage of the special activities being held from Katrin in the north to Avdat in the south and left the cities for the countryside. They took the traffic jams with them as convoys of friends, neighbors and relatives took to the roads. Many came armed with mobile phones, hotel reservations and festival tickets. "The local tourists have become more spoiled. They want to be pampered," said David Meninger, the Nature Reserves Authority warden in charge of the Dead Sea area. A tour of the region Monday found the parking lots by the hotels, spas and beaches full, some with up to 20 buses and more than 100 private cars. Far fewer vehicles were parked by the entrances to the traditional backpackers' wilderness routes. And of the tourists who did arrive there, many were in off-road vehicles. The "stick-and-sandals" approach to conquering the mountains was out. Jeeps and ATVs (*tractors*) were in.

"The jeeps and ATVs are now our biggest headache," Meninger said. "They don't stick to the paths; they harm the flora, scrape the sides of the wadi walls and leave indelible tracks of compacted earth. It's a worse problem than litter because you can always pick it up, but you can't do much to correct the harm caused by careless driving. And apart from physical damage there's the question of noise. Children from Tel Aviv have the right to come down to the wilderness and tour without hearing the sound of traffic for a change," Meninger said. The jeep travelers themselves had no regrets, however. "It's more exciting

than walking and you can see more when you're sitting in a jeep," said Eli Oren, of Netanya, on his second jeep tour of the area. "You get to places you wouldn't see otherwise."

Even the backpackers found it hard to leave the comfort of the city. At the Nahal Tze'elim parking lot, Meninger discussed the day's plans with six post-army youths who had just arrived from Tel Aviv and Even Yehuda. It was nearly 11 a.m. "We didn't want to start hiking so late but it wasn't easy getting up early," explained one of them. Irit was using the mobile phone to tell her mother they'd arrived safely. Orli was worried about snakes and leopards. "We weren't exactly combat soldiers," Amit joked. So what brought them down to the desert? "We wanted

to get away from it all. We like getting out and the Kinneret was too crowded," explained Oded, leading the band of less-than-intrepid explorers. Five cars were parked at Ein Boker reserve. Three belonged to one large group of friends and relatives setting out with 12 children for the waterfalls and springs. "We're just looking for water and rest today," explained Yair Ofek from Hod Hasharon. "Yesterday we did 12 hours hiking and the kids aren't talking to us any more."

The children might have found it tough going but 78-year-old Haifa grandmother Miriam Pinkov pronounced the trip "lovely." Noa Ofek, 12, and her eight-year-old sister Maya declared the tour "hard work but fun."

Most of their classmates were going on trips, "but some are just going to shopping malls or rollerblading," according to Noa. At the Flour Cave, there were far more visitors - and garbage. Meninger collected a sackful of plastic cups and Coca-Cola bottles. "This isn't too bad today. Sometimes it's much worse," he said. On the ridge above the exit from the cave the anxious mothers were calling down: "Where's Rivke? Has anyone seen Dovele?" A group of 30 Bnei Brak and Tel Aviv residents were having trouble keeping track of their many children. Only eight-month-old Moshe, tugged into a Snuggly on his father's back, was in no danger of getting lost. The group was one of the many haredi tours in the

area. "It's the best time for us to travel," said Gershon. "People aren't working, the yeshivot and kollelim are closed and it's a great opportunity for people who want to see the country but don't travel on Shabbat." Like many of the visitors, Gershon had been attracted to the desert after hearing of traffic jams in the North. At the Ein Gedi Nature Reserve, a long line of people queued up by the entrance gate. Secular hikers dressed down to the bare minimum, eating pitta sandwiches, stood next to groups of religious girls wearing long-sleeved frilly dresses and shiny shoes. "It's a holiday. That's why we're wearing our best clothes," explained Miriam Ben-Yefet from Ramat Gan. Some 2,000

visitors toured the reserve on Monday alone. EATING OUT was not simple. Some travelers had planned on having lunch at the nature reserve and tried to ignore the notices forbidding visitors from bringing food into the site. "But it's kosher for Pessah," protested one hiker when told to leave his sandwiches at the gate. "It's just a bit for the baby," said another, carrying enough food for an entire day-care center. One haredi man caught picnicking at the site didn't give an excuse at all. He simply refused to speak to the female warden who had confronted him. The "barbecue brigade" avoided the nature reserves and fought the battle for space on the beaches. All along the Ein Gedi coast there was a stomach-churning smell of sulfur from the Dead Sea mixed with meat from *mangalim*. Unperturbed, David Ohayon from Tiberias declared: "We love it here." Ohayon and two sets of neighbors could see no irony in traveling some 200 km. to hold a barbecue at Ein Boker while thousands of tourists flocked to the shores of the Kinneret. "The local residents have to get away," he said. "We don't want to suffer from *amcha* [common people]. Anyway, we love Eretz Yisrael and we want to see as much of it as possible." Ohayon was fighting off flies, a dog and hordes of other travelers looking for a site to set up their barbecues. The hundreds of foreign visitors - from Indonesia, Poland, Germany and the US - seemed perplexed by the crowds. "We were in Jerusalem yesterday [Sunday] for the Easter celebrations," said Sabrina from Germany. "We didn't see so many people." Insisting on speaking Hebrew as a matter of principle, she was at a loss for words to describe the crowds at the nearby spa. She simply rolled her eyes and hugged herself, repeating: "Harbeh anashim [many people]."

Others seemed to be having a better time. Four Ben-Hamu brothers, their spouses, in-laws and children formed a 25-member band ranging in ages from 18 months to 62 years. They were touring the Judean Desert both on foot and by jeep and planned to finish the journey at Mamshit National Park. "It took us about 30 days' preparation for three days' vacation," said Hagit from Jerusalem. "There should have been more of us but some of the women were pregnant and decided not to come."

Bar Fogelman, a nine-year-old from Hadera, put the whole holiday into perspective with the clarity of childhood. "Well we came because everyone does it. It's something you just do. Like Seder night. Everyone argues about it but enjoys it. Going on a trip's the same. Everyone argues and then goes home to tell their friends what fun it was. We'll do it again next year. Somewhere."

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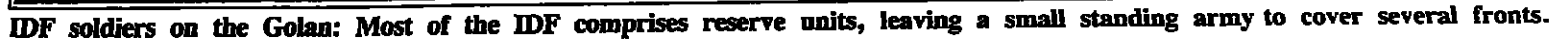
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1995 The Jerusalem Post
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 of nuclear ambiguity
 Steve Rodan reports

מכרזים לתחבול

Police officers try to keep a lid on terror

Bomb-squad members watch – and wait – especially during holidays, Bill Hutman reports

IT'S 2 p.m. on Sunday in the unofficial waiting room of the Jerusalem bomb squad at the Old City police station. Weapons ranging from grenades to small rockets are displayed on one wall; on another are samples of disguised bombs used by terrorists, including a can of beans, a plant pot and a book. F-Sgt. Ronen flips through an explosives manual. FSM Ariel reads the morning newspaper. A police radio is heard in the background.

The two 26-year-olds (whose surnames, like those of all bomb-squad members, are forbidden for publication) are on call, waiting for orders to check a suspicious object, inspect a parked car believed to be a car bomb or, in the event of a terror attack, neutralize anything from hand grenades to homemade explosives.

"I don't feel at all nervous," Ariel says. "We are professionals, waiting to do our job."

That job, however, has never been more pressured and intense as in this age of suicide bombers, the "Engineer" and bombs of unprecedented power, according to security officials.

Members of bomb squads across the country are briefed periodically by the General Security Service about the potential for attack in their areas, and what to be on the lookout for.

Recently, the GSS report to the Jerusalem bomb squad was

that terrorist groups would try to carry out a bombing in the capital, according to security sources. Similar warnings went out to several other parts of the country.

"Pessah for most of the country means a vacation; for us it only means more work," says Dep.-Cmdr. Avi, the Jerusalem bomb-squad commander.

For Avi and his colleagues, the holiday means stepped-up surveillance in crowded areas such as parks and shopping centers which might be the target of bombings; more patrols throughout the Jerusalem area; and hundreds of checks of suspicious objects reported by the public.

Jerusalem's bomb squad responded to 6,586 suspicious-object calls in 1994, some 6 percent higher than the previous year, when police acted on 6,208 such calls.

Preemptive operations by the squad were also stepped up during those two years and remain on the increase, according to Avi. Bus stops were checked for bombs in the Jerusalem area 5,699 times last year, compared with 4,441 in 1993, an increase of 28 percent.

The bomb-squad patrols carried out special searches for car bombs 5,617 times last year, up by 28 percent from the 4,376 such searches in 1993.

The numbers are particularly striking considering that in virtually every check, no bomb was



Jerusalem's bomb squad responded to 6,586 suspicious-object calls in 1994. (Ariel Jerolimski)

found – what looked like a bag of trash was indeed just that. Jerusalem last year involved bombs, including one suicide bombing. There were three bomb attacks in the capital in 1993 and 14 in 1992; none was a suicide bomb. Despite measures taken by bomb squads in the capital and

elsewhere, little can be done to prevent suicide missions, according to security officials.

Bomb-squad members are often left with little more to do than pick up the pieces. In the suicide bombing in December at the Jerusalem International Convention Center, for instance, the explosive had long since gone off when the bomb squad arrived.

Squad members were left to search the surroundings and the mangled body of the terrorist for other explosive devices. With the help of specially trained dogs, they combed the area and came up with nothing.

The bomb used in that attack was the work of "the Engineer," the nickname of Hamas terrorist Yehia Ayyash, who was behind the construction of many of the bombs used in the wave of suicide attacks during the past year, according to security authorities.

"There are clear signs of bombs made by 'The Engineer' or terrorists trained by him," one security source says.

The stories about the capabilities of "The Engineer" are grossly exaggerated, according to Avi.

"The media have made a myth of him, like they have done with other terrorists in the past, who we in the end eliminate," says Avi, clearly angry at any implication that the bomb squad is intimidated.

"Bombs used in suicide attacks are the simplest to build," Avi says. "The part of homemade bombs that normally goes wrong is with the timer. With suicide attacks, there is no need for the timer.... Only a simple apparatus is needed."

What "The Engineer," and his copycats among Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists, have done that is new is substantially increase the amount of explosives.

"Before, it was small pipe bombs, sometimes with just a couple of grams of homemade explosives," Ronen says. "Today, bombs are being composed of dozens of kilos of factory-made explosives."

According to security sources, the factory-made explosives have been smuggled into Gaza through Egypt. From there, some of the explosive material is smuggled into Judea and Samaria.

"I wouldn't say it doesn't affect our work knowing that the we are now confronted with bigger, more potent, bombs than ever," Ronen says.

In addition, mines uncovered in Gaza, reportedly placed there by both the Egyptian army and the IDF, have been used by terrorists in devising bombs. The sources noted that mines were among the explosives found on the truck discovered by police last month in Tel Sheva.

Bomb squads across the country are constantly updating their equipment to respond to developments by terrorists. For security reasons, it is forbidden to publish details.

THE TWO Jerusalem officers on duty Sunday afternoon are relative newcomers, having joined the bomb squad, like many of its other members, after serving in elite army units.

Ronen has been on the squad 18 months; Ariel, just nine months.

Both began work when the small pipe bombs that were commonplace in the Seventies and Eighties were already out of fashion, replaced by Hamas and Islamic Jihad suicide bombers.

Only time will tell how the pressure will affect them. Their commander says the average bomb-squad member stays on active duty for about five years. Then they usually switch to desk jobs within the bomb-squad unit, to other police jobs or they leave the force.

The work is tough, and the benefits, at least financially, are not as good as they should be and were just a couple of years ago, according to Avi.

Bomb-squad members used to be entitled to three extra rest days each month, in addition to normal vacation time. That was axed two years ago for financial reasons, to their dismay and anger. According to Avi, bomb-squad members earn an average of NIS 1,000 more per month than other officers with the same years of experience.

"No one who has taken this job is in it for the financial benefits," Ariel says. "I think I am speaking for most people on this squad when I say this job gives you the feeling you are contributing, that you are saving lives, and that is what keeps us here."

The modern-day exodus: From anywhere to anywhere

THE WEEK THAT WAS
 MICHAEL YUDELMAN

SO, it was supposed to be a nation on the move this Pessah, was it? From reports of the great flight overseas, one would gather that matzot were more dangerous than Scuds as the people fled before them. There seemed to be a fair chance that more Israelites would flee into Egypt than fled out of it 3,000 years ago.

Now, if the country emptied such vast numbers back into the lands of the goyim (where once we sighed during Seder "next year in Jerusalem"), how come this massive gridlock of people on the coastal roads north of Tel Aviv?

Thousands thronged to the night-of-the-right rally in Netanya, but hundreds of thousands failed to through anywhere as their cars locked into an endless chain of hot, stopped metal stretching from Tel Aviv to Beit Ynnai. Herzliya and Kfar Shmaryahu solidified into a vast car park; the Ayalon highway was an immobilized jolt.

Shouldn't all these people be abroad? Out of town? Or was it the journalists who fled, leaving caretakers and messengers in deserted offices to make up "great exodus" stories? Since Easter coincided with Pessah, perhaps the traffic jams were caused by

Christian pilgrims.

Well, something was going on. Ben-Gurion Airport's duty-free area was mobbed by 40,000 Israelis swarming to pack a record 200 outbound flights on Pessah Eve. The flying frenzy roared on for the rest of the holiday week with 3,000 scheduled flights, not including cargo, special flights and immigrant flights.

The Pessah exodus had traditionally been mainly a singles' pilgrimage, booked up a year in advance, by the unattached who did not want to be stuck in Israel on what was, for them, the loneliest night of the year.

This year the singles were lost among thousands of families, who seemed to have decided "enough already" when it came to long boring Seders with Polish aunts and other auditory relatives.

Of the suckers remaining, thousands were allegedly hiding out in Galilee and along the Kinneret. An incredible 17,000 were supposedly roughing it at the Negev Rally.

Well, at least Tel Aviv would be airily empty.

Wrong again. Shopping malls were sold out, pedestrians got knocked aside by teenage rollerbladers or exasperated dads dragging screaming and ketchup-smearing toddlers from McDonald's. And never mind the traffic jams in and out of the city; there wasn't a parking space to be found.



Segev: Okayed an advertising campaign that he objects to. (Isaac Harari)

What was once called the matza holiday has turned into the national shopping holiday. Matza holiday? Hah! By Tuesday, the weather bureau informed us that the haze across town marked the arrival of the shavur. Nonsense. It marked the microwave defrosting and toaster grilling of the mountains of pitot that had grown tired of lurking in the freezers of city homes and restaurants.

BRING ON THE CLOWNS
 Yi'ud (the odd Tzomet splin-

ter, if anyone remembers) is getting ideas above its station. It now claims to represent the centrist alternative for the next elections – an apparent plagiarism of the Third Way idea for peace-process doubters who don't want to be identified with the loony left or right.

So far, the only thing Yi'ud is



Salmowitz: Those clowns acted like gangsters and hijacked the vote. (Isaac Harari)

providing is loony entertainment. Two of the Yi'ud threesome (yes, three; that's it, folks), Energy Minister Gonen Segev and Deputy Housing Minister Alex



Goldfarb: Ad campaign attracted many potential new members. (Yossi & Uzi)

Goldfarb, decided in a Pessah-Eve meeting to demote the third MK, Esther Salmowitz, from the chair of the party's central committee.

"Those two clowns acted like gangsters and hijacked the vote," whined Salmowitz. How on earth, she blubbered indignantly, could she be expected, on Pessah Eve, to get from her Nahariya home to remote Ashkelon – where the two bounders held the meeting. (Couldn't they do it all by mobile phone?)

Yet a few days later, Segev and

Salmowitz approved NIS 300,000 for an advertising campaign they both object to. Why? Because Goldfarb twisted their arms.

Segev signed the checks, so kindly provided from state funds, because (mere rumors) Goldfarb threatened to continue slandering him if he didn't. Salmowitz, on the other hand, only did so because she was "forced" to sign by the majority decision of the other two. Never mind that she barely speaks to the other two and votes against the coalition in the Knesset.

That leaves Goldfarb. He denies everything, saying the advertising campaign is extremely successful and that many have called to join Yi'ud.

Or maybe he meant "Likud."

NEXT YEAR... WHERE? The dwindling band of believers wandering in the desert could sigh "next year in Jerusalem" and mean it.

No, not Israelites, but Histadrutites.

On Pessah Eve, their prophet Haim Ramon signed a contract to lease a Jerusalem property from December as the new Histadrut headquarters.

"Whoever wants to come, will, and whoever doesn't, won't," Ramon quipped enigmatically about the hundreds of Histadrut workers in Tel Aviv. He told his

treasurer to work out a severance agreement for the 100, or preferably, hundreds – who will opt to quit rather than schlepp to the capital every day.

Leaders of the large trade unions and Na'amat said they will not be joining Ramon and Co. in Jerusalem, thank you very much. Their offices will remain in Tel Aviv, where the action is.

Old-timers sucked their pipes. "Puts us in mind of dat dere Ben-Gurion fella who once tried to shift the Histadrut to Jerusalem."

"Back in '21 that would be – Mandate days. Darn me, we was only a year old then. Put the Histadrut right up there on par with them Mandate government fellas was his idea."

Aaargh! What he did was cut us off from our power center. Dang me, if less'n two years later we wasn't all scurryin' back to Tel Aviv with our tails between our legs.

"But who knows. That young Ramon fella might make it work. Got the right attitude. Doesn't give a cow's hoof for silly things like workers and trade unions."

But then – if the Histadrutites do reach the promised city after 75 years in the Tel Aviv sand dunes, will the great leader accompany them?

Or will he be watching from a distant political hill?

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In order to be accepted, applicants must receive a passing grade on entrance examinations in Hebrew and mathematics.

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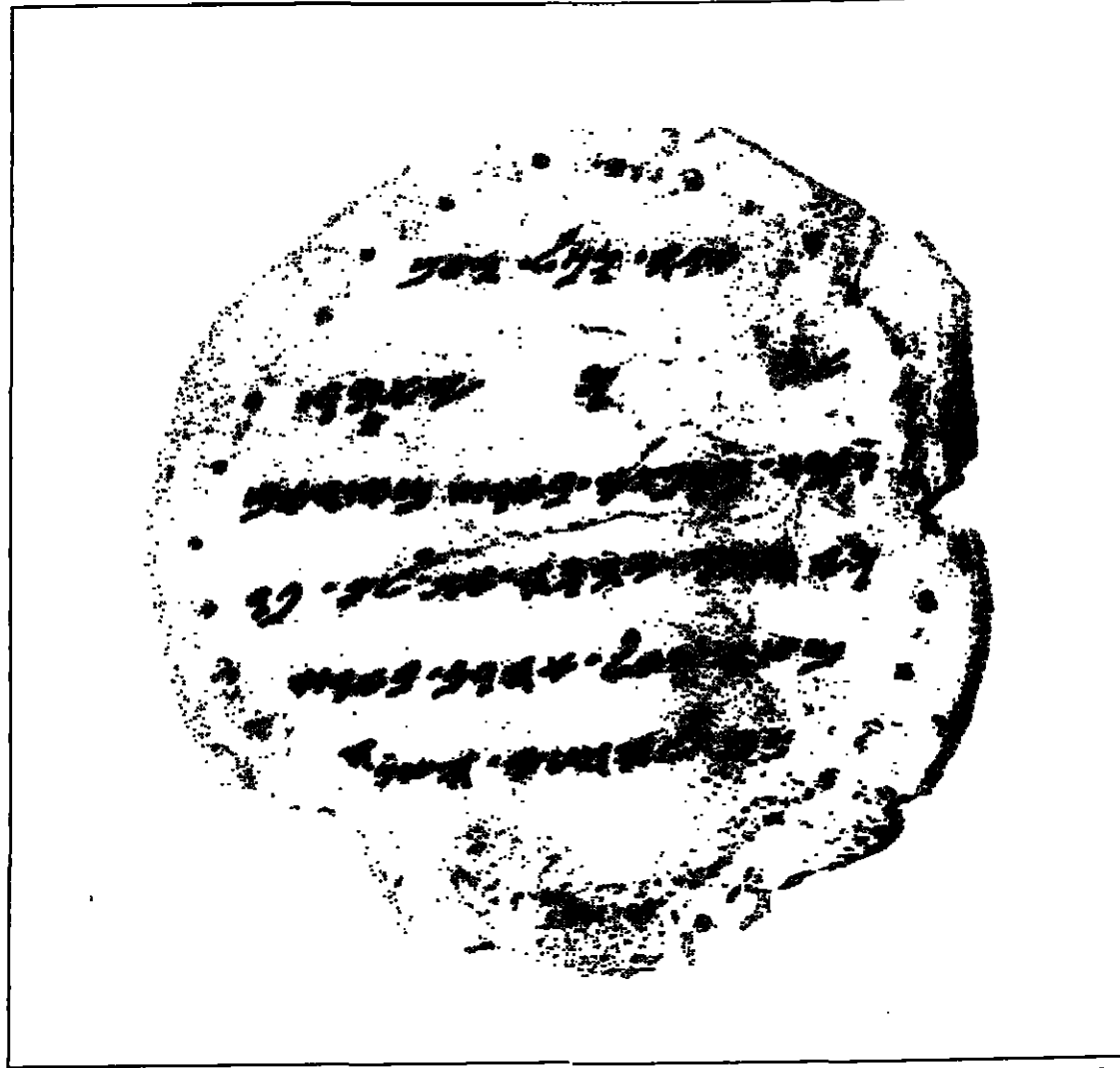
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 Office of the Dean of Students
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Please bring the registration fee of NIS 170 (non-refundable), two photographs, and copies of: Teudat Olet, I.D. card, confirmation of completion of upan, and matriculation certificate.

For more information, please call (03) 531-8274/653.

The Dead Sea Scrolls dating game

Recent carbon-14 datings of 15 of the scrolls show that most predate Christianity, despite what some scholars claim, Abraham Rabinovich reports



A linen fragment, attached to a leather thong used to fasten the scroll, was found to be well within the period established for the Dead Sea Scrolls.

THE Dead Sea Scrolls, whose origin has been the subject of fierce scholarly debate for a generation, have now been provided by science with firm confirmation about at least one aspect of their being — many of the scrolls, if not the bulk, are older than Jesus.

Carbon-14 tests of 15 of the scrolls carried out at the University of Arizona in Tucson show that most are dateable to the first and second centuries BCE.

The finding, released this week, is of some significance in the polemics surrounding the scrolls, since there are a few scholars in the world, including Israel, who have linked them directly to the founders of Christianity. In the past, there were even scholars who dated them to the Middle Ages.

Magen Broshi, former curator of the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum, noted that the

scrolls tested were all scribal copies, which meant that the originals were composed even earlier than the Carbon-14 datings, perhaps many years earlier. "The bulk of the scrolls, the significant scrolls, are BCE," he said. This finding, said Broshi, did not negate the view that beliefs reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls clearly had a strong impact on early Christianity.

THIS IS the second time that pinhead-size samples taken from Dead Sea Scrolls have been submitted to Carbon-14 testing, which measures the age of objects by their radioactive carbon content. Five years ago eight scroll samples were examined by a Zurich laboratory which dated the bulk of them between the second century BCE and the beginning of the first century CE. Some scholars, however, chal-

lenged the validity of these findings. The fact that only eight of some 800 Dead Sea Scrolls were tested was also cited as a reason for regarding the Zurich findings as inconclusive.

The notion that the Dead Sea Scrolls are Christian, or proto-Christian, has been advocated by a small number of scholars abroad. An Israeli scholar with a

similar view is Prof. Yehoshua Efron of Tel Aviv University, an authority on the history of Christianity. In an interview in *Ha'aretz* last September he is quoted as saying that the Dead Sea Scrolls are Christian — "apparently not of the mainline Pauline church but of some Christian sect I cannot identify... the content of the scrolls — the beliefs, rituals, cus-

tom — all stem from Christianity in one form or another."

The latest Carbon-14 datings in large measure corroborate the Zurich findings, according to Prof. Emanuel Tov of the Hebrew University, editor-in-chief of the Dead Sea Scrolls Publication Project. One of the scrolls examined in Zurich, a copy of Isaiah, was reexamined at the

University of Arizona in order to compare the results. The two datings were only 15 years apart, said Tov. They also overlapped the paleographic date arrived at earlier on the basis of analysis of the script itself: 150-125 BCE.

Also included in the Arizona test for control purposes were three papyrus texts found elsewhere in the Judean Desert bearing exact dates from around the time of the Bar-Kochba Revolt in the second century CE. These dates fit well within the dating margins offered by the Carbon-14 tests.

The Arizona findings are unlikely to still skepticism entirely because the dating margins are very wide, in some cases as much as 200 years, and they offer only a 68 percent probability that the range encompasses the correct age of the document. Nevertheless, says Tov, in almost all cases the paleographic date arrived at by scholars fitted well within the Carbon-14 bounds. "In general," said Tov, "the tests have supported dates previously determined by paleography."

One reading, however, may perk the interest of Christian-Qumran advocates. A sample from a scroll known as the Messianic Apocalypse, linked by some scholars to early Christianity, was dated between 35 BCE and 59 CE by the Carbon-14 tests, leaving open the possibility of a Christian-era origin denied by the paleographic date than had been attributed to it (100-80 BCE).

On the other hand, the *peshet*, or commentary, on Habakkuk displayed at the Shrine of the Book — a document also linked by some to early Christianity — is pushed back by the Arizona datings from a paleographic dating of 30-1 BCE to anywhere between 104 and 43 BCE. One copy of the important Community Rule with a paleographic dating of 100 BCE showed a wide diver-

gence in the Carbon-14 test, which dated it between 134 and 230 CE.

Because of the probability that the parchment had been contaminated, a second sample of the same Community Rule scroll was tested. It was subjected to extensive acetone cleaning before testing. Here the results — 11 BCE to 78 CE — were significantly closer to the paleographic reading. Scientists say that the true date of the tested object can lie anywhere within the margins and not necessarily at the center of the range.

The tests also uncovered a clear error of attribution regarding one of the two linen fragments tested. The fragment, acquired from antiquities dealers, was believed to have been one of the linen fasteners used to bind scrolls at Qumran. However, the Carbon-14 test dated the fragment to the 12th-13th centuries CE. It is now believed to have been acquired by Beduin in one of the caves of Wadi Murabba'at, where similar textiles were found, and not at Qumran. However, the other linen fragment did fall well within the period established for the Dead Sea Scrolls. Attached to it was a leather thong which had been used in fastening the scroll.

The tests were carried out free of charge at Arizona University by scientists at the Accelerator Facility for Radioisotope Analysis using a tandem accelerator mass spectrometer, the first of its kind dedicated exclusively to radiocarbon dating. The method requires only milligrams of a sample for testing purposes, compared to gram-size samples in the conventional technique. The scientific work in Arizona was conducted by Dr. A.J. Timothy Jull, and Prof. Douglas J. Donahue. Tov and Broshi represented Israel in the project, which was carried out on behalf of the Antiquities Authority.

Oscar de la Renta is bringing his hangers to an El Al hangar

GRAPEVINE

GREER FAY CASHMAN

THE absolute coup for organizers of the May 1, NIS 500-a-ticket gala fashion benefit for the urology department at Tel Hashomer Medical Center would have been the attendance of Queen Noor of Jordan. Both the queen and Leiza Rabin, the wife of the prime minister, are personal friends of internationally acclaimed designer Oscar de la Renta, who is celebrating his first visit to Israel with the unveiling of his winter 1996 collection before 1,000 guests in — of all places — an El Al hangar at Ben-Gurion Airport.

The designer himself invited Queen Noor to Israel to witness the launch of his new collection. Although she reportedly considered coming, other commitments got in the way. Lea Rabin, who also happens to be president of the Friends of Tel Hashomer, will definitely be there, and the front-row seat that was reserved for Queen Noor will probably be occupied by Yitzhak Rabin, who makes an appearance at most of his wife's functions.

LAST YEAR's visit to Israel by Prince Philip has paved the way

for other British royals, and rumor has it that Princess Margaret, sister of Queen Elizabeth, who is due to visit Jordan next month, may stop by on her way home.

LABOR MK Rafi Elul and his wife Ofra are secretly hoping that not everyone accepts the 10,000 invitations they sent out for Saturday night's Mimouna celebrations at their home in Mazkeret Batsya. But they are pleased that Rabin, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss, MKs from the whole political spectrum, entertainers such as Avi Toledano, Shaika Levy, Shlomi Inbar, Rafi Amar and Ze'ev Revach, plus some 30 foreign diplomats, including Talal Rhouma, the special emissary of King Hassan of Morocco, have promised to attend.

The street in which the Eluls live will be sealed off and giant marquees will be set up to accommodate all the guests. The neighbors apparently don't mind; in fact they're all rolling up their sleeves to help. That includes making thousands of mouflettas — those delicious Moroccan pancakes that are a traditional part of the Mimouna fare.

IF SUPER-SOL can't put on a spread fit for a king, who can?



Jaguar international chairman Nick Schille, flanked by designer Hava Levy (l) and consultant Nili Kariv at the Eretz Yisrael Museum. Not just a machine, but an art. (Israel Sun)

The pre-Pessah clean-up of ha-metz afforded a perfect opportunity to throw a combined farewell bash for New York-born Mordechai (Modi) Kreiner and a congratulatory reception for Israeli-born Ya'acov Glazberg, who has replaced Kreiner as Super-Sol's vice president for merchandising.

Employed by the chain almost since its inception, Kreiner retired recently after close to four decades of service. According to the rumor mill, he stepped down after missing out on a coveted and anticipated promotion. Kreiner was the moving force behind the international food festi-

vals, which not only gave Super-Sol an edge over its rivals, but also provided incentive for local food manufacturers to produce new and better products.

Now acting as an independent marketing consultant, Kreiner counts among his clients the rival Shekem chain, whose general

manager Amnon Dick was also present along with other executives of competing companies: Ya'akov Gelbard, general manager of Blue Square Co-op, and Doron Kashur, general manager of Co-op Tzafon. Needless to say, Super-Sol president David Alphandary and chairman Leon Recanat were also on hand.

RETURNING TO the microphone after an Israel Radio news break in a program of old-time favorites, guest "bombers" Ofra Haza signed on: "And here I am, yours again..." In fact, continued the popular songstress, she belongs to Israeli audiences no matter where she travels.

The underlying sentiment that one can take the Israeli out of Israel, but one can't take Israel out of the Israeli was also emphasized by TV-ratings superstar Dudu Topaz in his Channel 2 special *They Discovered America* last week. Clips from Topaz's bilingual performances across the US were studied with Israeli expatriates, some of whom told him the well-worn tale that they were coming home as soon as they became financially independent. And to prove that sometimes this is the case, Topaz also interviewed people who were already back here or were liquidating their North American businesses in order to return in the near future.

HE HAD never before spent a Seder night outside Israel, and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat's first Pessah venture into the Diaspora was to a particularly distant and exotic destination — China. But it wasn't a lonely Seder. There were some 180 people at the Seder in Beijing, including Israel Foreign Minister, personnel, El Al representatives, business people and members of Shohat's entourage.

Communal Seders in Beijing will probably never compete in size with those in Katmandu, which are usually attended by several thousand people, but Shohat is firmly convinced of China's increasingly important role in global economics, which means that more Israelis and Jewish executives of multinational corporations will be there next Pessah and during future festivals of freedom.

US AMBASSADOR Martin Indyk hosted a Seder which was both religiously and politically ecumenical, with Jews, Moslems and Christians among the guests, who included Israel's first ambassador to Egypt, Eliahu Ben Elissar, and Marwan Jamil Mousasher, Jordan's first ambassador to Israel. Most of the guests were old friends who had met in Washington, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Cairo or Amman.

THOUGH GOVERNMENT offices are traditionally closed during Pessah, not all government officials stop work for the duration. Returning to Israel on Sunday, Shohat was immediately back in the saddle. Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein spent much of the holiday period explaining the benefits of the new reforms in the education system;

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid was busier than usual attending environmental protection events, and Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin was in Austria and Spain for talks with foreign ministers and other dignitaries.

Beilin's discussions with Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock focused on Austria's relations with Iran — specifically in regard to Iran's escalating nuclear capability. Beilin did not forget to "bide again seek Austria's cooperation in ongoing attempts to trace the whereabouts of missing Israeli navigator Ron Arad.

IN AN era of redundancies and early retirement, it's nice to see that a great-grandfather is not only kept on well past retirement age, but is also promoted. Yitzhak Graziiani, conductor of the IDF band since its inception, was last week promoted to colonel in the presence of four generations of his family. Chief of General Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak pinned on Graziiani's new rank insignia.

INTERFERING in the internal politics of other countries is considered improper. But that didn't deter Mapam chairman Hanan Erez from publishing an advertisement in the Hebrew media in which he exhorted French citizens living in Israel to vote for socialist Lionel Jospin in the upcoming elections for a successor to French President Francois Mitterrand.

STAND-UP comedian Doron Neshet went to a shopping mall and quizzed passersby on the contents of the Haggada to prove that few people take note of what they are reading. No one got a perfect score. There were some incredible examples of ignorance on questions related to "Who Knows One?" but what stumped everyone except one young woman, who was obviously more familiar with Aramaic than anyone else, were questions related to the Haggada's closing and arguably most widely known song "Had Gadya." She was the only one who knew the meaning of the words *shunra* and *hura* — which, for the record, are cat and stick.

PRIOR TO the opening of Automotor 95 at the Tel Aviv Fair Grounds, Jaguar hosted a snob appeal reception for 300 specially invited guests at the Eretz Yisrael Museum. Jaguar, according to Coventry-based Nick Schille, the company's international chairman, is more than just a machine. It's an art — a link with tradition. And that's why a museum was chosen to show off the current line to those who can afford to pay anywhere between NIS 299,000 and NIS 425,000 for one of the new models.

Invites included Sony importers Han and Vered Greenbaum, architect Avi Ruskin, hotelier Dabi Schiff, beauty queen and former model turned fashion designer Hava Levy, Labor Party treasurer Moshe Cohen and his wife Leora, basketball champion Mickey Berkowitz, business consultant Nili Kariv, shipping magnate Jacob Alalouf and the omnipresent Nagva Bashlony, wife of the Egyptian ambassador.

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Public is harsh

Public is harsh

Public is harsh

Public is harsh

Public is harsh

Public judgment is harsh and swift

CAPITAL TALK

TEDDY KOLLEK with Amos Kollek

PEOPLE today seem so eager to publicly condemn anybody and everybody who is accused of anything.

Nobody is willing to wait for the only proper institution – a court of law – to pass judgment.

Public judgment, propelled and fueled by the media, is harsh and swift. A day or two later, newspapers and TV have moved on to the next subject, but meanwhile individuals and their families are seriously hurt, sometimes ruined for life, because of a rumor, gossip or a sensational headline.

Former Histadrut treasurer Artur Yisraelovich is a good example, not because he is a saint, but because he is such an obvious target. He represents an institution that is clearly not flawless, and that everyone loves to hate.

But does that in itself make him a criminal? Shouldn't he be considered, like every other citizen, innocent until proven guilty?

Another recent subject of public uproar is Prof. Adi Tzemah. The atmosphere of public lynching that stemmed initially from the publication of one newspaper article is scary.

Tzemah has a family, as well as a distinguished academic career, and one wonders why the thirst for his blood seemed so potent for the week or so in which he made headlines and television talk shows, as though he were a mass murderer.

The matter in question was an issue between him and his wife, a woman who seemed perfectly qualified to fend for herself in an intelligent and effective manner. One wonders whether the news media truly cannot find other subjects.

Is the public really so desperate and so hungry that it needs such sensational stories all the time?

For most newspaper readers and TV viewers, each story dies after a few days; but for the person and family at its center, it may never go away. Their lives may be destroyed, and for what? To sell a couple of issues of a newspaper or boost the ratings of a TV show?

This type of defamation does not seem to be just a passing fad. It is setting a norm. It is educating an entire nation, especially its youth, to forgo decency and respect for the rights of people, especially public figures, for the sake of a cheap thrill.

It also sidetracks us from the really important issues. We spend our time passing judgments on individuals about whom we know nothing instead of trying to solve problems such as absorbing immigrants, making peace, creating new industries and so on. These seem to pale by comparison with one juicy story about the alleged misfortune or misconduct of one individual.

Even more important for our common fate is another distressing phenomenon.

Nearly every week on TV, interviewers push their guests, even if the interviewee is the prime minister or a senior cabinet member, to give short, dramatic answers or to provide a scoop when discussing a recent tragic event or other crucial matter.

If the guests try to introduce a more serious discussion of something they deem important, they will be cut short, none too politely, because their host knows only too well that substance will not raise ratings nearly as much as one cheap thrill.

Egyptian weekly attacks the 'Post'

EYE ON THE MEDIA

DAVID BAR-ILLAN

THE following article appeared on April 4 in the Arabic Egyptian weekly *Al-Mussawar*. It was signed by the editor, Mahmoud Sa'adani, who – like all editors of the establishment press in Egypt – is a government appointee.

"The *Jerusalem Post* is an Israeli newspaper said to have close connections with the ruling circles in Tel Aviv. That is why it shares characteristics with Israel's rulers, the most obvious of which is its insolence. The paper is insolent, and so are Israel's rulers. And while legal statutes stand between us and Israel's president [we are prevented from attacking him – translator's note], nothing stands between us and the paper. If the paper is insolent, we are, thank God, even more insolent.

"The *Post* is edited by stupid Zionists, and its editorial staff is headed by an incorrigible Zionist seduced by his fantasies into imagining that he has won the war even though he has only won a few battles. But the war itself is still on and it will go on for as long as God wishes and its outcome is known.

"What will happen to the Zionists is what happened to the Crusaders before them, and what happened to the Tatars before the Crusaders. This head man and all the editors of the paper will return to their homes in the ghetto, in Warsaw, Budapest and Sofia and other cities.

"This Zionist ass warns President Hosni Mubarak against making a mistake or taking irresponsible action on the nuclear-weapons issue and advises him to act with restraint in making decisions so that he will not repeat the experience of Abdel Nasser in 1967, and suffer the same defeat as Nasser's, among the causes of which were misunderstanding and misconduct on Nasser's part.

"This stupid Zionist effendi, at the helm of this Zionist newspaper, is most likely a Mossad agent; and the proof of this is that he believes that we were defeated in 1967. This was not a defeat, puny editor, but a multiple conspiracy in which the American president Mr.

Johnson himself participated. He agreed to receive a senior Egyptian official on the day of the Israeli aggression to mislead the Egyptian leadership into believing that the US was serious about mediating and seeking a peaceful solution. The conspiracy is what defeated us, not the Israeli army. O head of *The Jerusalem Post*, and the proof of this is that the Egyptian army which defeated you in 1973 was smaller in number and equipment than the army in 1967.

"So I say to the Zionist journalist editor of *The Jerusalem Post*: a little humility, you who are baselessly boastful [puffed up on empty] in the Arabic – translator's note; and remember that if America abandons you for even one day you, honorable refugee, would be, like hundreds of refugees like you, on a ship crossing the Mediterranean with Jewish immigrants back to exile.

"And America, for your information, is an empire which will meet the same fate other empires have met. The day will come when it will disintegrate down to its parts and be dismantled down to its components, and it will be in a much worse state than the Soviet empire which preceded it. I just wish this happens in my lifetime.

"And I swear in the name of the All-Powerful that if I meet you I shall stick it to you in your posterior and nothing will help you. And until that day I suggest that you talk with courtesy when you talk about Egypt and with humility when you discuss Egypt's president; and that you recognize your size and the size of others, because with your policies you are nothing but Washington's agent in the Arab region, and your army is nothing but the vanguard of the American army in the Middle East, and your prime minister is nothing but a permanent representative of the White House in Tel Aviv.

"Excuse me, O my Zionist colleague, if I say in your honor: *Mal'oun Abuk*

[cursed be your father] and cursed be the fathers of all those in the Tel Aviv government whose opinions you express."

AT FIRST glance, the most striking element in this harangue is its unmitigated crudeness. *Al-Mussawar* is not a sensationalist tabloid but a respected paper, and its editor-columnist is a well-known intellectual. Yet it would be difficult to imagine anything so vulgar printed in a serious journal anywhere in the world.

But more disturbing is the total disregard for historic facts. Leaving aside the fiction about the size of the Egyptian army being smaller in 1973, Sa'adani's rewriting of the 1967 war is a stunner.

Presumably, Egyptians regained their honor in the 1973 war, which they celebrate as a victory (probably the only "victory" in history in which the final cease-fire was signed at the gates of the victor's capital).

Yet Sa'adani still feels compelled to resort to the rationalization used by Nasser immediately after the Six Day War: that it was an American, not an Israeli, victory. The very idea that they could be defeated by Israelis is still unthinkable and unacceptable to Egyptians.

Striking, too, is the persistent theme that the war between the Arabs and Israel is still on – that the current "peace" is but a cease-fire, to be followed by the decisive, final battle in which Israel will be destroyed like the Crusaders. That this is the prevalent attitude among Egypt's intellectuals and the defense establishment is hardly comforting.

And there is something almost pathetic in the impotent, vengeful rage against the US, an empire whose disintegration Sa'adani would like to witness, but is also the superpower whose

largesse Egypt enjoys as a reward for making peace with Israel.

Yet the most incredible part is what Sa'adani's cites as the basis for his harangue.

The whole pretext for this tantrum is that *The Jerusalem Post* insulted Mubarak by insolently threatening him with Nasser's fate if he persisted with his NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) policy.

But the *Post* has never said anything of the kind. In several editorials it asserted that Egypt's insistence on an Israeli signature on the NPT made Egyptian motives suspect.

The nuclear option has been used as an argument in favor of territorial concessions. Israel's doves are those who maintain that Israel can safely relinquish strategic assets because it can rely on the nuclear option in case optimism about Arab intentions proves wrong.

To insist that Israel forfeit the nuclear option is to demand that it become totally vulnerable.

But Sa'adani obviously knows that quoting *The Jerusalem Post* accurately would not arouse his readers. So he fabricates a story, guaranteed to make every Egyptian bristle, about the *Post* threatening the Egyptian president with another 1967-like defeat.

UNFORTUNATELY, Sa'adani is by no means an aberration. Another leading columnist, Mahmoud Abdul-Monem Murad, has this to say about the suicide bombings in Gaza in another establishment paper, *Al-Akhar* (translated in *The Egyptian Gazette* of April 12):

"None of our writers has criticized the Palestinian suicide against the Israelis and Jewish settlers, either in the Palestinian autonomous Gaza Strip or inside Israel itself.

"But following Sunday's double suicide bombings which left eight Israelis killed and up to 50 wounded, a number of questions have arisen.... While answering these questions, we should take into account that the blood of Arabs is more precious than the Israelis'...."

Of self-inflicted fear

A VIEW FROM NOV
MOSHE KOHN

"[The Jewish people's] past, our heritage... is not misfortune.... But... heroic suffering... stemming from the heroic act of self-dedication of a whole nation to something it regarded as infinitely higher than itself, in fact, as the infinitely highest. No Jew can do anything better... today than to live in remembering this past." – Leo Strauss, "Why We Remain Jews," 1962 lecture at University of Chicago Hillel, later published by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs

YEHUDA ARBEL, one of the great vicars on earth of the divine "Guardian of Israel," often said that "the Jews are a great nation, only we don't know it."

Arbel, who played an important part in tracking down Adolf Eichmann, had reached the rank of deputy-director of the General Security Service (GSS) and was GSS chief for Jerusalem and Judea/Samaria after the Six Day War. He died 11 years ago at 64. Jerusalem historian and military expert Daniel Ben-Yakov, who was his confidant, and others who were close to Arbel speak in superlatives of his ability to organize and execute clandestine operations; his love *cum* skeptical assessment of the nation he served; the healthy degree of ruthlessness with which he did his job; and his beautiful blend of wisdom and cunning.

ARBEL WAS wrong: We do know that we are a great nation. Only too many of us would rather waive the honor of greatness.

Greatness entails the great burden of being special. Specialness seems to be more than we want. We rather aspire to be something ordinary, "like all the other nations."

The rejectionists include not only unthinking, though well-intentioned, people who seek out of life only comfort and simple pleasures. Misleading them are our "post-Zionist" political, cultural, intellectual and social leaders who would deliver Israel, and the Jewish people in general, to spiritual oblivion.

They would prefer that Patriarch Abraham had remained in his father Terah's idol-manufac-

turing business. Instead, he performed his act of faith, turning his back on the idolatrous fatalism of his time in response to the call of the Unknown and Nameless, to take control of his destiny (Genesis 12 and 15).

They would prefer that Moses had stayed home in Pharaoh's palace in which he was raised. Instead, he went out "unto his brethren," got himself passionately involved in their fate and received and finally answered the call from that same Unknown and Nameless to liberate his brethren (Exodus 2-3).

They would prefer that Nahshon, chief of the tribe of Judah, had not been so bold that night of the Exodus, the seventh night of Pessah 33 centuries ago tonight. While his brethren stood terror-stricken between the raging sea and the approaching Egyptian army, Nahshon leaped into the sea, inspiring the rest of the people to follow, thereby causing the sea to split and enabling them to cross over "on dry land in the midst of the sea" (Exodus 14; *Sota* 37a; *Mechilta d'Rabbi Yishmael*, "Beshallah," 5).

They would evidently have been among that large majority of the offspring of Jacob/Leah/Rachel/Bilhah/Zilpah who had it so good in Egypt that they did not wish to leave with Moses. Consequently, those ancient assimilationists, who preferred dependence and easy comfort to sovereignty and responsibility, perished in Egypt and were buried there during the ninth plague, the plague of the three days of darkness (*Mechilta d'Rabbi Yishmael*, "Bo," 12 and "Peituta Beshallah"; *Shmot* Rabba 14:3 and 20:19; *Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 10; *Yerushalmi Shabbat* 6:4).

The rejectionists would prefer that our ancestors had responded, "No, thanks," or, "We'll think it over," when Moses conveyed God's message to them at Mount Sinai shortly after leaving Egypt, saying He would make us His "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" if we agreed to behave in a certain way. Instead,

they responded, "Everything that God has spoken we will do" (Exodus 19). Our rejectionists are doubly angry that our ancestors compounded their "folly" by replying again, with double emphasis, "We will do and we will listen [or obey]" (Exodus 24).

The trouble is that the "like-all-the-other-nations" status to which they aspire seems to be a status of historylessness; of trivialness; of no responsibility, hence of no guilt, no repentance, no forgiveness, and no pride.

In their pursuit of "like all the other nations" they are copying many of the worst features of the "other nations" and few of the best features, as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi noted 18 centuries ago (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

They would gladly forgo the honor and burden imposed on us by John Adams, second president of the US. On February 16, 1809, he wrote in a letter to one F.A. Vanderkemp:

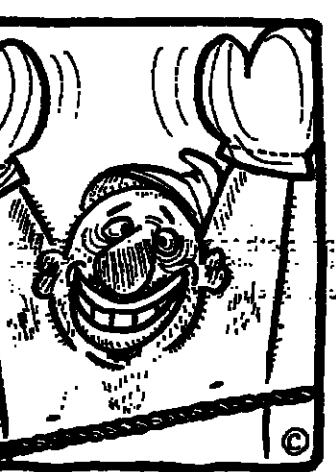
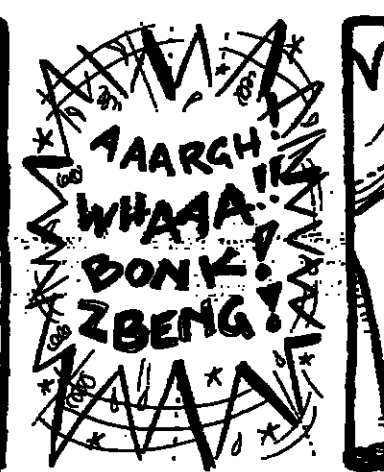
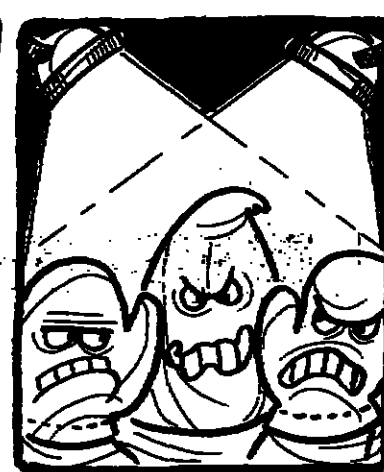
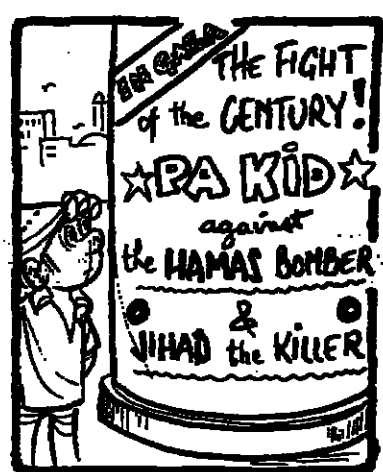
"I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize men than any other nation. If I were an atheist, and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for civilizing the nations" (cited in *Treasury of Jewish Quotations*, edited by Joseph Baron).

Even the most invertebrate secularist Jew who would see a healthy future for Jewry should examine and consider the Tanach in its totality and its place in the annals of Man, and then ponder Adams's assertion.

TO PROUDLY accept Adams's assertion and take Leo Strauss's attitude to our Judaism, in the light of events and despite the example of our so-called leaders, we may need the lesson the Irish poet James Stephens teaches in his poem, "In Waste Places":

As a naked man I go
Through the desert sore
afraid....
The lion crouches there!
I am the lion and his lair!
I am the fear that frightens me!
I am the desert of despair!
Night or day, what'er befall,
I must walk that desert land
Until I dare my fear and call
The lion out to lick my hand."

SRULIK



How Pessah defies the laws of history

SHABBAT SHALOM

SHLOMO RISKIN

"For I will pass through Egypt on that night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, man and beast. And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment. I am God." (Ex. 12:12)

ON a metaphoric level, Pessah relives the struggle between two opposing views of reality. The Egyptians saw the world as a manifestation of fixed and immutable laws, whether of biology, physics or even magic.

Egyptian science, religion and might dominated the world, overwhelming weaker cultures. But in the midst of the empire, an opposing view emerged, the Hebrew mentality, which claimed that the law of the pyramids – including the proud sciences upon which they were based – were not the only laws in the universe.

Israel's view of reality posits a Creator who remains above and beyond the fixed scientific formulae of universe and history. Indeed, this Creator has a vision and a goal for this world, an ultimate destiny of morality, peace and redemption, which will come about as a result of the eventual ethical perfection of humanity. Israel's mission is to teach morality to the world. And the Almighty guarantees that He will interfere with the laws of history to ensure the Jews' survival and the vindication of their teaching.

The Egyptians did not believe anyone could change the fixed laws of nature and refused to recognize morality or the people of Israel as significant factors in human affairs. They could therefore enslave hundreds of thousands of people with no problems of conscience.

After 210 years of living among Egyptians, the inexorable law of the natural assimilation of the weaker by the stronger should have caused the Egyptian civilization to swallow the Israelites. But the children of Abraham stubbornly held on to a separate identity.

When Pharaoh says no, he's not just saying no to their freedom; he's also saying no to the historical process which the Jews represent: a status which claims that the people of Israel operate outside the usual historical process.

What characterizes the plagues is not only their miraculous nature, but the immunity of the Jews to them. Water turns to blood, but not the water of the Jews. There is a paralyzing darkness that lasts three days and nights, but the Jews move about freely.

The Israelites are skipped by the processes affecting everyone

else. Before the 10th plague, God instructs the Israelites to sacrifice a lamb and smear its blood on the doorpost, commanding them to "eat it with your waist belted, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and you must eat in haste. It is the Pessah offering to God.... The blood will be a sign for you.... I will see the blood and I will pass over you." (Ex. 12:11, 13)

There was no logical explanation or historical precedent for what happened that night.

Pessah not only celebrates the liberation of the Jewish nation, but also marks the essential characteristic of its role in the world. This "passing over" was not a one-time event during the month of Nisan almost 4,000 years ago, but is the key theme of all Jewish history.

The historical current may be moving in a certain direction and then, for whatever reason, a meta-historical event takes place. The logic of historical process would dictate the demise of the Jewish people, but God passes over logic to secure the continued existence of eternal Israel.

This is ultimately the message of Pessah: God's active role in history.

The major commandment of

Pessah – eating matza – is similarly characterized by skipping a step in a process. Matza results when dough is not allowed to follow the natural process of rising and fermenting.

Thus, each Pessah puts us at the vortex of God's interference with history. Emulating God, we transform the "stuff of life" into a symbol of who we are as a nation and why our existence has defied all laws of assimilation.

Even the most momentous and influential event of modern times, the dissolution of the Iron Curtain, would never have been possible had it not been for the Jewish refuseniks who showed the world that one could defy the seemingly inexorable laws of communism.

The refuseniks were a manifestation of an eternal struggle between those who believe that everything can be controlled with the right formula and those who believe that passing over is a built-in element in the history of the universe, leading always to the one God of morality.

The once proud pyramids have been outranked by the Five Books of Moses, expressing the Divine message of change and morality. And hopefully we shall continue to sidestep and pass over static strength and solidarity in favor of Divine morality and redemption.

Hag Sameah and Shabbat Shalom!

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Staircases and access roads go halfway to heaven

Tourists can now make a trek parallel to that of the monks of Meteora in their mountaintop monasteries, Steve Silk writes from Greece

FROM a rocky aerie in the forest of stone known as Meteora, the insistent tok-tok-tok of a wooden mallet hammering out a call to prayer seems like the most natural sound in the world.

In this community of mountaintop monasteries, the spirit reigns.

As swallows dart through the twilight and the sun melts into the headwaters of the Peneios River far below this spiritual city in the sky, wandering tourists can watch the last light of day retreat through a maze of monoliths topped with precariously perched monasteries. If these stones could speak, they might utter a prayer.

The impossible landscape of Meteora — a huddle of hundreds of blunt stone spires reaching like stubby fingers to grasp at God — is so unearthly that it could only invoke a sense of wonderment, or inspire an act of faith.

So it seems almost natural that when wandering Christian ascetics happened upon this maze of cave-pocked pillars more than 1,000 years ago, they reckoned it to be a place halfway to heaven.

To get even nearer to a union with their God, these early ascetics renounced their earthly attachments, climbed the stones and took refuge in caves. There they sought redemption through prayer and meditation.

In time, the self-denying monks gathered for worship and the sacrament of communion. Worship became a bond of brotherhood, and the hermits began to haul stones and timbers back up the monoliths as they returned to their aeries.

Eventually they came to create a community, an assemblage of 24 monasteries perched like so many eagles' nests built atop sheer pinnacles. Today some of those monasteries look like multistoried castles, complete with bell towers, red-tiled roofs and chapels.

And the monks, like wild birds of the spirit, soar above it all.

Seeing those lofty settlements atop



A nun crosses a courtyard near the chapel at St. Stephen Monastery in Meteora, one of Greece's hottest tourist attractions. (Steve Silk/Hartford Courant)

the sheer rocks fires the imagination. How could anyone have climbed those colossal Theonies abound. They built scaffolds, some say. Others suggest kites were used to deploy ropes over the pillars. Or maybe they climbed trees that once grew among the rocks.

The pillars present such a challenge that visitors from around the world are drawn to Meteora to attempt climbs like those made by the monks long ago.

TODAY THIS astonishing village in the sky is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Greece. The prayerful austerity of the monks' world is interrupted daily by caravans of tour buses and conga lines of tourists marching up the serpentine staircases that lead to these still-vital places of spiritual retreat.

The staircases — and the tourists — are new. It wasn't so long ago that the few visitors to the monasteries endured a

treacherous trip in a net fastened at the end of a long rope, or else climbed terrifying ladders of chain draped over the sheer walls.

A few of the monasteries are reached by perilous-looking forerunners of the modern cable car, little platforms suspended from ropes spanning deep gorges. More than a few passengers have died in transit. If someone fell, it was considered God's will.

But times have changed. Now most of the monasteries have carved stairways into the stone or erected bridges to usher outsiders into their world. The income from admission fees helps the monks finance a life-style that might otherwise be impossible in the modern world.

So visitors are tolerated. But tourists and monks seem to exist in almost parallel worlds. The monks manage to ignore their visitors.

They pass silently through the hall-

ways and chambers of their monasteries like black-robed wraiths while visitors gawk.

The monks are not inhospitable, but recognizing and acknowledging so many visitors would make a spiritual and monastic life impossible.

At the harder-to-reach monasteries where visitors are less commonplace, the atmosphere can be quite different. At the Holy Trinity Monastery, reached by hiking down a shallow ravine and climbing a long, steep staircase, Brother John may invite you to sit in the shade of a lilac tree to share conversation and a cup of thick Greek coffee.

He is a man full of surprises, a 40ish monk in beard and black robes who has vacationed in Hawaii, visited relatives in New York and survived a bout with cancer. He bestows upon his visitors 100 years of blessings.

John is one of only four monks at

Holy Trinity. Together they live traditionally, subsisting in part on vegetables grown in their stony gardens, raising flowers and spending nearly a third of every day with their heads bowed in prayer.

The silence on the terraces outside the monastery heightens the sense of remove from the everyday world. Far below, glimpsed between knuckles of rock, lies the busy little town of Kalam-baka, a stark reminder of earthly existence.

INSTEAD OF returning to that world, you might prolong your stay in this rarefied place once known as Lithopolis, the city of stone.

A warren of twisting trails links most of the still-active monasteries and winds past the crumbling ruins of others. All along the way are ascetic caves, many still walled off with rocks and rotting timbers. Here and there, shepherds

guide flocks of sheep through shaded valleys.

These ancient pathways were once the only link between the monastic communities, but now a road rambles through the forest of stone. It links all monasteries open to the public and passes some of the more intriguing ruins.

While the monasteries differ greatly in size — from the enormous Great Meteora, a virtual city, to the tiny but picturesquely perched convent of Rous-sano — there's a sameness in visiting them.

Many feature museums displaying such artifacts as ancient icons and manuscripts, stylized crosses and other ritual objects.

But most enthralling, in a horrific way, are the ghoulish Grand Guignol murals decorating the narthex of nearly every chapel in Meteora. Intensely painted scenes depict the gruesome martyrdom of countless saints.

Walls and ceilings write with images of saints being boiled, burned or broken on the wheel. Others are flayed or roasted or stoned. Still others suffer decapitation, drowning or the sting of arrows. Other scenes depict a sort of hell, with fanged, flame-belching monsters devouring hapless sinners. Many of the scenes are oddly passionless — it is spiritual, not physical, life that matters. By these standards, the monks' self-denial seems tame. But the visceral sights of the narthex sharpen the contrast of entering the soothing nave, where the walls shine with beatific images of saints haloed in gold.

The best place to get a glimpse of the monastic life is at Great Meteora. Here, where hundreds once meditated, fewer than 30 devotees remain. But smoke still rises from the ovens where bread is baked and the brick pits where meals are prepared. The call to prayer is still sounded by striking a wooden plank, a tradition traced to the biblical story of Noah, who summoned animals to the safety of the ark by banging on a board.

Far below the chapel and the living quarters stands a charnel house, where the bones and skulls of long-dead monks line dark and dusty shelves.

And in a move that seems an affront to those departed souls, boorish visitors queue up nearby to buy videos, postcards, chintzy-looking reproduction icons and assorted kitschy souvenirs.

To escape that potentially maddening scene, make like a monk and climb a rock. There are hundreds to choose from, and many offer spectacular panoramas of the magical-looking mountains.

But take care. Meteora's spiritual magnetism may draw you in. (The Hartford Courant)

Where the idols were smashed

SEE IT HERE
HAIM SHAPIRO

WHEN King Josiah ordered the religious reform that resulted in the smashing of images and dismantling of high places (II Kings 22-23), little did he realize that he was leaving a remarkable record of the idolatry of his day.

The smashed vessels are from what archeologists have described as an Edomite shrine, linking it to the people who inhabited what is now southern Jordan.

They are just a small part of the impressive finds at Ein Hatzeva, a site archeologists believe is Tamar, which Solomon built in the wilderness. The restored excavations were opened to the public this week.

The idols will be part of a special exhibition at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem in June. Meanwhile, visitors to the site can see the remarkable fortress, dating back to the ninth and eighth centuries BCE of the Judean Kingdom, excavated by Dr. Rudolph Cohen, deputy director of the Antiquities Authority.

The site is just off the northern end of the Arava Highway. It is adjacent to Ir Ovot, a community which has been involved in a constant battle with the local council. Its leader, Simcha Perlmutter, came to this country with a group of followers some 28 years ago and set up a settlement which was not recognized by the authorities.

Although he says he is an observant Jew, Perlmutter has engendered opposition from the regional council as a result of his former practice of bigamy and his declarations that Jesus is the Messiah.

He has been involved in a series of lawsuits and counter suits with the Israel Lands Authority, which has attempted to remove him from the site. Two years ago the High Court of Justice ordered Mekorot to provide the settlement with water.

Cohen said he received nothing but cooperation from Perlmutter, who told the archeologists about his finds and agreed to move the buildings of Ir Ovot to facilitate the excavation.

TODAY THE buildings of Ir Ovot are dwarfed by the Judean fortress, a square structure extending 100 meters on each side, with towers rising at each corner. Much of the site has been reconstructed but, according to Ye-

shayahu Ben-Ya'acov, who supervised the reconstruction for the Antiquities Authority, the work has not been intrusive.

"We only went up to the height of existing walls," he said, adding that much of the reconstruction involved re-erecting walls or towers which had shifted as a result of earthquakes.

The walls of the fortress, Ben-Ya'acov said, were built in sections, with inner and outer retaining walls linked with a series of connecting walls, all filled with rubble. When these walls were undermined as a result of earthquakes, they were reinforced with a glacia, a loose wall of stones rising at a sharp angle to the ground.

Just outside the walls of the fortress stand the stones of the Edomite shrine. Michal Davagi Mendels, the Israel Museum curator for the Israeli and Persian periods who is preparing the upcoming exhibition, said that because the vessels, in the shape of humans, were deliberately smashed, all the pieces were in one place and it has been possible to reconstruct many of them.

According to Cohen, the entire Judean fortress had been covered over with rubble for centuries. Only the smaller Roman fortress above it had remained visible.

Today one can also see this fortress, which was a stopping point on the spice route that led from India, via Arabia, to Gaza.

A more impressive find from the Roman period is the bathhouse, complete with many of its rare, earthenware paving tiles. Archeologists have found it impossible to reproduce tiles similar to those used by the Romans.

Beside the bathhouse are the extensive remains of a structure which was either a palaestra or a caravanserai, Cohen said.

Although the strategic position of the site, together with the fact that there was (and is) a spring, meant that it continued to be used throughout the Turkish and British Mandatory periods, there is little left from those times. Only a well and a stable, with a water pipe between the two, remain from those periods.

The site has assumed a new importance as a halfway spot for travelers on the road from either Jerusalem or Tel Aviv to Eilat, its twin port Aqaba, or to the Arava border crossing on the way to Petra.

Cheap vacations to Turkey are back for the taking

WITH the end of Pessah, Israelis can again enjoy rock-bottom prices for vacations in Turkey. The cheapest is Yossi Tours, which has seven-night packages to Antalya or Marmaris for \$339, including half board. Other packages may cost somewhat more, such as Diesenhau's seven-night package to Istanbul for \$457.

FOR THOSE who do leave for Turkey or elsewhere, James Richardson, the company that has the franchise for duty-free sales of liquor, tobacco, cosmetics and electronic goods (but not sports shoes) at Ben-Gurion Airport, now has a telephone and fax

service. Outgoing passengers can order their goods in advance and pay for them at a special counter, where they may either pick up the goods or leave them to be collected on their return. The company has a catalog of over 80 pages of goods from which to choose, but no prices are listed. Tel: 03-9732277, Fax: 03-9732288.

PASSENGERS AT Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport will now be able to freshen up with a sauna between flights. The fee for the sauna, in the Mercury Hotel in the airport's duty-free area, is 25 guilders (about \$14). The hotel also has private showers for

TRAVEL TIPS
HAIM SHAPIRO

about \$6. A single room in the hotel is about \$55 per night and \$42 for day use.

VISITORS TO London or Paris who would like to take a short trip across the English Channel can now buy a package that includes passage in a Hover-Speed vessel and three nights in a hotel at the other side. Prices from Paris to London start at \$182. From London, the prices to Paris start at \$165, to Amsterdam at \$193, and to Brussels at \$187. Hover-

Speed is represented in Israel by Saviv Ha'olam.

AN INTRODUCTORY price for VUSA coupons on Continental Airlines is available for transatlantic passengers.

The regular price of three coupons is \$449, but El Al passengers may buy them for \$334; for Air France, Alitalia and some Swissair passengers it is \$349; and for Tower Air passengers it is \$399.

COMPETITION IS heating up for rental car vacations in Germany. Lufthansa is offering what it describes as the lowest rental-car rates available, starting with a

Renault Clio or similar car for DM 271.70 (about \$195) a week. Prices include VAT and insurance.

Another deal comes from Clal Teufa, which is offering a charter flight-car rental combination. The cheapest, a flight to Munich and a week's rental of an Opel Corsa, comes to \$455 per person for a minimum of two passengers.

PARENTS WONDERING how they will deal with their children all summer can ship them off to camp in the US.

Ofakim is offering those 11 and over a 28-day stay at a camp in New Jersey for \$2,485, including air fare.

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and again!

and again!

and again!

and again!

and a

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YOU ARE HERE!

Suits come out of the closet

FLAIR

GREER FAY CASHMAN

IN the United States where workplace dress codes are stricter than they are here, Friday is freedom day to wear anything one wants. Even on Wall Street, the de-rigueur uniform of the business world is abandoned in favor of jeans and statement-making T-shirts.

The theory behind the casual attire is that without the constrictions of suit and tie, people are more creative.

In Israel, where suits were seldom worn except by lawyers, bankers and the ultra-Orthodox, the suit has gradually developed popularity – both in the business community and among politicians.

But even Shimon Peres, whose personal style has done more to expose Bagir and other Folgat trade names to the world than the company's public relations and advertising campaigns, occasionally discards the jacket and tie in favor of an open-necked shirt – especially on the hustings.

Economics and Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet is also doing his bit to promote the suit. Before entering the cabinet, Shetreet favored suits in various shades of gray or blue, but since taking office he has allowed much more color to invade his closet, and the palette of his jackets (sometimes with matching trousers) includes white, cream, beige, terra-cotta, yellow, brown, orange, turquoise, green, and red. Shetreet also occasionally makes a public appearance sans jacket and tie.

Likud MKs such as David Levy, Moshe Katsav and Meir Sheerit, who are known for their sartorial splendor, also opt for less formal attire when the occasion warrants the doffing of constricting clothes.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, who before becoming a minister used to be an open-necked shirt and sleeveless sweater man, is increasingly seen in suits. His collection, though not as extensive as that of some of his fellow ministers, is obviously growing.

Even Ran Cohen and Dedi Zucker (both Meretz MKs) occasionally wear a jacket, though on the whole they prefer open-necked shirts. Fashion-wise, Zucker is the more adventurous of the two. While Cohen sticks to classics in fine stripes, white or pastels, Zucker goes for stronger hues, bold stripes and prints.

Die-hards who refuse to bow to fashion's dictates include Tzomet's Rafael Eitan and Pini Badash and Meretz's Haim Oron. While Oron's shirts appear to have come off a comparatively recent production line, Eitan and Badash look like advertisements for the kibbutz laundry of the 1950s.

THE PEACE process has to



German designer Hugo Boss seems to have drawn inspiration from the Edwardian era for his single-breasted suits.

some extent influenced Israeli men's fashions. With more international conferences taking place in Israel, and more Israelis participating in more international conferences abroad, suits and ties are finding ever wider markets.

The Edwardian era seems to have been the source of inspiration for Hugo Boss, the German status-symbol designer exclusively represented in Israel by Vendome.

His immaculate, single-breasted three-piece suits are distinguished by the curved hemlines in both jackets and vests. Trousers are narrow, without being tight, and sleeve lengths just slightly exaggerated.

Bagir continues to be Israel's paramount producer of men's suits, but perhaps in deference to the taste of highly rated TV host Yair Lapid, it is showing some of them with T-shirts instead of collared shirts and ties. This is evident in both its Cacharel and Metropol collections which combine classic elegance with an avant-garde flamboyance.

Although there are some wide-lapelled double-breasted jackets, the trend is more towards the single breasted, boxy variety. Metropol's mix-and-match options allow for numerous casual/formal and light/dark combinations, proving that 2½ suits can indeed go a long way.

Barbecues: High-tech and easy

OFF THE SHELF

MARTHA WEISELS

SO many gas grills and cookers are being offered for outdoor use this year that one begins to wonder if it wouldn't be simpler to stay in the kitchen.

Amgazit Camping – a manufacturer, importer and wholesaler, based in Kfar Etzion – promotes a range of outdoor gas grills from NIS 1,080 to NIS 1,950. (Some kitchen stoves cost less.)

The most sophisticated of these are Char Broll grills imported from the US. They come in three sizes, starting at NIS 1,100. These are nonportable, meant for backyard or rooftop barbecues, and they use an Amgazit-manufactured gas cylinder or can be connected to the household gas supply. The biggest model has a gas ring for a cooking pot, as well as a grill surface.

The distribution firm says that those who barbecue for large families or large parties should invest in a grill surface of 55 cm. by 40 cm.; smaller families can manage nicely with 48 cm. by 30 cm. Amgazit assures me that all its gas grills have been approved for safety by the Israel Standards Institution. The ISI is supposed to check all imported gas appliances at the port of entry; local products are obligated by law to follow ISI safety standards.

Today's outdoor gas grills have what is confusingly called "electronic ignition," although they are not connected to an electricity source. This means simply that a mechanically produced spark (as in a cigarette lighter) ignites the gas, so that no matches are needed.

According to Amgazit Camping, gas grilling is easier and cleaner, and the results taste just as good as meals prepared on charcoal grills. For die-hards (like myself) who can't be convinced, the company sells charcoal grills as well. Retail prices range from NIS 150 to NIS 850. Among the best are Weber grills from the US.

To aid charcoal users, Amgazit has imported a device called a Charcoal Lighter (*malhi pehamim*). It is in the shape of a pitcher, and you put some charcoal and newspaper inside. Its design is supposed to give the optimal air-flow conditions for easy ignition of the charcoal, which you then transfer to the grill. No smelly supplementary fuels are needed. It sells for NIS 49.90.

An even cheaper ignition aid is a natural substance called Grill-Chik, consisting of granules made of olive pits mixed with wax, which reportedly ignite readily without smoke or smell. You sprinkle them right into the grill, where they burn for a prolonged period, during which the charcoal itself should start to burn. The natural granules cost NIS 9.90 a package.

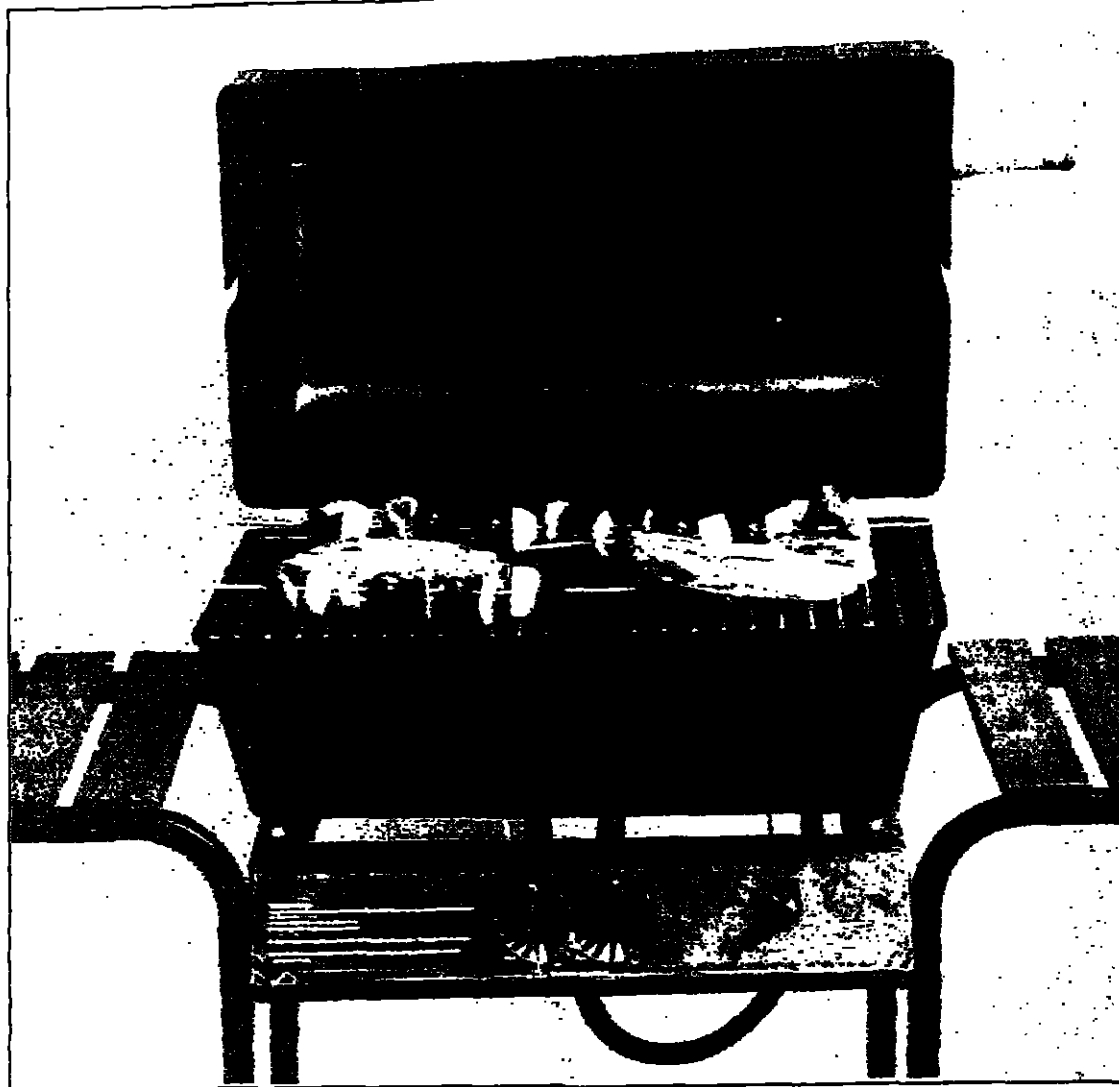
Amgazit Camping is also the official importer of US-made Coleman thermos bottles and insulated boxes, which range in price from NIS 49 to NIS 1,000. The latter is a 64-liter insulated box, big enough to hold food for a clan or institutional picnic.

Among the thermos bottles, the newest are stainless-steel models, said to maintain a steady temperature (hot or cold) for 24 hours. The 1.2 liter size costs NIS 133; a three-quarter liter size is NIS 115.

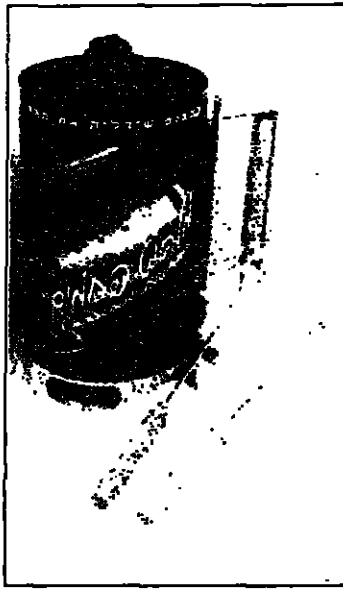
Products made or imported by Amgazit Camping can be found at department stores, camping stores, and DIY chains.

FOR THE start of the picnic season, Gad Camping is offering an imported gas grill at NIS 670 instead of what it says is the usual price of NIS 1,200.

The grill, from China, has "electronic ignition" and two stainless-steel burners under the grill itself which control the degree of heat. It boasts a large grilling area, convenient work



To fire up the picnic season, Gad Camping features an imported gas grill (top) with work spaces on either side; Amgazit Camping provides a range of thermos bottles and insulated boxes to keep drinks hot and food cool; for easy igniting, Amgazit also offers Charcoal Lighter.



rather than grilling, Pele-Gaz is a portable indoor/outdoor gas cooker with a single burner.

It is imported from Japan by Radad, best known as a local manufacturer of stainless steel cutlery.

The Pele-Gaz cooker is particularly lightweight, only 2.61 kg. It has a strong burner with a double-ring flame, facilitating speedy cooking.

It is equipped with automatic (match-free) ignition and has a safety mechanism which shuts off the gas supply if the flame blows out. The gas container is said to be simple to change.

Apart from its usefulness at picnics, the importer says the little cooker is suitable for soldiers on reserve duty and for young couples who have not yet purchased a stove.

Radad says it has ISI approval for the Pele-Gaz.

The special introductory price is NIS 220. The product is available at Hamashbir Lazarchan, Home Center, at Nature Protection Society shops, and at stores for camping and sporting goods.

AFTER ALL that cooking, it may be time to lie down for a rest.

Reshet P is a new line of sunshade tents from Polysack, a plastics firm owned jointly by kibbutzim Nir Yitzhak and Sufa.

There are three versions of the

plastic tents. They cast a long shadow, are lightweight and washable, and are said to filter out UV rays. Of the three, only Tzelohit, a family shade tent for the beach, has sides and looks tent-like. The other models, Delta and Mirage, have overhead sheeting only.

These tents come in kits together with everything needed to erect them, including poles, tent pegs and ropes. There are three available colors: red, blue and green. They can be purchased at DIY chains, and at camping, sporting goods and gardening shops.

Prices range from NIS 100 to NIS 160.

FOR THOSE headed for the Mima festival on Sunday, or anyone else who hankers for the flavor of Morocco, the Co-op Tzafon (Co-op North) chain is holding its second annual Moroccan Festival.

All food items are kosher, and most are kosher for Passah.

It's no longer so starting to see products imported from Arab lands, but many of the Moroccan items are exclusive to Co-op Tzafon.

Among the particular attractions this year are Ajcha brand olives and mushrooms, ornately decorated drinking glasses and coffee sets, Oriental lounging robes and house slippers – and charcoal grills.

Job hunters can search in cyberspace

LAURA GARDNER
NEW YORK

LOOKING for a job? No need to blacken your fingers on black-wanted ads. Some of today's hottest career resources can be found through a home computer.

Job hunters are turning in growing numbers to the Internet, its World Wide Web and on-line services for a leg up on the competition.

Without leaving home, they can study company profiles, peruse job postings and even get advice from employees at the businesses they hope to join.

Bryan Cantrill, a Brown Uni-

versity junior, said he was hired by an Ottawa software firm which "never, ever would have put an ad in a newspaper."

"There's no way I would have found this opportunity – or they would have paid any attention to me – through traditional means," said Cantrill. He said he researched companies, circulated his resume, entertained offers and negotiated his salary entirely via the Internet.

More than 3,500 job postings from 1,700 companies are updated daily on E-Span Interactive Employment Network, a free service on Internet and accessible through outlets including CompuServe and America Online.

Career Mosaic offers similar services on the World Wide Web. While high-tech companies predominate, on-line career forums aren't limited to technophiles. There are bulletin boards for virtually every profession. Searching for jobs in cyberspace can be more efficient than using papers and "snail mail."

(AP)

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May 19, 1995

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مكتبة النخيل

Dream house has become a nightmare

DEAR RUTHIE
RUTHIE BLUM



Dear Ruthie,
After searching for a year, my wife finally found the "dream" home. The only problem was the price. Seeing how much my wife needed to buy it to fulfill her dream, I took out extra loans, both from the bank and from family members. We just moved in, and are now completely broke and heavily in debt.

Now my wife is disappointed that we can't buy all of the furniture she had her heart set on. I feel almost cheated. I thought that making that extra effort would at least put a smile on our faces, but instead we are at each other's throats.

What can I do?

Hearth Sick
Mevaseret Yerushalayim
Dear Sick at Hearth,

From your description, you and your wife are in parent-child roles. Rather than buying a house the two of you could afford, and rather than making a joint decision to go into debt to fulfill a shared dream, you became the "giver" and your wife the "receiver."

You can do two things: Insist upon going over all bank statements and family loans together with your wife. Making her the "treasurer" would be even better.

And start showing a little of your own enthusiasm over this move.

Just as the financial debt is as much your wife's responsibility as it is yours, the "dream house" is as much your home as it is hers.

Dear Ruthie,

I have strong reason to suspect that my married son is having an affair with a former girlfriend, who is now also married.

His wife is pregnant and not very well, which is probably why he is looking elsewhere. I know that confronting him will not work, and will only destroy our relationship. I am terrified his wife will find out and leave him, taking their children whom he adores. Is there anything I can do?

Worried Mother
Somewhere in Israel

Dear Ruthie,

I agree with you about the risk involved in confronting your son. But I don't agree with your explanation of why he's having an affair with a former girlfriend.

Old flames represent choices forfeited. Though some people embrace their circumstances with resolve, many others spend their lives contemplating, if not mourning, the "road not taken."

Your son's behavior may indicate he is one of the latter.

Still, you should not assume he is ignorant of the consequences of his actions.

And your suspicions may be baseless, which is why saying nothing is certainly the best course.

Dear Ruthie,

We were invited to a wedding recently. When we arrived at the time written on the invitation, it was clear we were way too early. But two hours later, the rabbi hadn't yet arrived! Finally, we had to leave, as we were both expected at work.

I feel we may have offended our host. Friends laughed at our naïveté for showing up at the time specified, saying that you always have to add at least an hour and a half.

Maybe that's customary, but it is a custom I can't get used to. Do I owe my host an apology?

Inked Inviter
Jerusalem

Dear I.I.,

An explanation, rather than an apology, is more in order. Your host is not to blame for the tardiness of the rabbi.

However, you arrived on time, and remained as long as you could, given other obligations.

You needn't take your friends' jibes too seriously. Promptness is a hard habit to break, even for the sake of custom.

Letters should be addressed to: Dear Ruthie, POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem. (Ruthie regrets not being able to guarantee publication of every letter, but will answer every letter received.)

Cool blue M&Ms get the vote

EARLIER this year the M&M/Mars candy company asked the public to vote on a new color for M&Ms - each of the three proposed colors was represented by a cartoon character.

The 10 million votes have been counted, and 32 percent went for

purple (a sort of Yuppie M&M with a cellular phone), 10 percent for pink (a Generation Xer with its cap on backwards), and 54 percent for blue, an expansive type wearing dark glasses and a show-biz smile. Look for blue ones in your M&Ms soon. (Los Angeles Times)

Spicy wives: Henry's women go feminist

BOOKS

DICK RORABACK

DIVORCED, BEHEADED, SURVIVED: A Feminist Reinterpretation of the Wives of Henry VIII by Karen Lindsey. Addison-Wesley. 272 pp. \$25.

THE FREE LIFE by Anthony Smith. Pustcart. 319 pp. \$28.

LESSONS FROM THE ART OF JUGGLING by Michael J. Gelb and Tony Buzan. Harmony Books. 224 pp. \$19.

CREOLE FOLKTALES by Patrick Chamoiseau. New Press. 112 pp. \$16.95.

REGARDING RODERER: A Novel about Genius by Guillermo Martinez. Wyatt/St. Martin's. 96 pp. \$13.95.

THE GATES by Chuck Wachtel. Viking. 402 pp. \$23.95.

CLEOPATRA. Marie-Antoinette. Helen, Joan, Salome, Mata, Mae.

Some women never lose it. No matter the state or the season, they continue to intrigue. So do we need another book on Henry VIII's six wives? Absolutely.

"They hover in our imaginations around the king like faithful satellites orbiting a splendid sun," writes Karen Lindsey, who then says what she really means - "and the fact that on scrutiny the sun reveals itself as a great, ugly mass of hot air does little to lessen the fascination."

Old Henry Tudor takes his posthumous lumps here - not that he doesn't deserve them.

Lindsey concedes that he came to the throne handsome, exuberant and intellectually curious. Soon enough - maybe sooner "roaring tyrant enveloped in layers of decaying flesh," by the time No. 5, Catherine Howard, slips between the royal sheets, it's beside "the old, pus-oozing flesh beneath the king's robes."

Lindsey's account is lively, well researched, entertaining and often elegant.

The dogged, and dangerous, insistence of Catherine of Aragon (No. 1) that she was the only rightful queen is explored at length.

Aune Boleyn (No. 2), cunning mother of Elizabeth I, comes across not as the "vicious shrew" of song and story but as a champion of the poor and a strong influence on Henry's faith.

Quiet, colorless, obedient No. 3, Jane Seymour, "the perfect wife," gets short shrift, save for her craving for fat quail while pregnant with Henry's only son, Anne of Cleves, No. 4, is the big winner: Repelled by the oaf she's sent to marry, she practices being "meek but not alluring," agrees to divorce and is well rewarded.

The famously unfaithful No. 5, Howard, is Lindsey's particular heroine, lauded for the "healthy sexual appetite" that "made her



Henry VIII's variety of wives - dogged, cunning, unfaithful, meek, decent and colorless (Jane Seymour, right) - come to life in Karen Lindsey's 'Divorced, Beheaded, Survived.'

life at least tolerable."

"Decent, ordinary" Catherine Parr wraps up a penetrating peek at women determined to maintain their own identities against horrendous odds, by a biographer with an old ax to grind.

"YOU JUST inflate this big balloon and off you go" - Rod Anderson. "We'll just play it by ear" - Pam Anderson. "Got to go now" - Malcolm Brighton. "They're sure in a hurry to die, aren't they?" - anonymous film producer, September 20, 1970: The Andersons - she 28, he 32, Americans - and Brighton - 32, English - lift off into a beneficent blue sky from a field in Long Island.

Above them, a magnificent, seven-story balloon. Below, an adoring crowd, whooping and waving. Ahead, Europe. They are never seen again.

Author Anthony Smith, veteran British balloonist and Brighton's mentor, is of two persuasions in this measured but vivid account of the fatal flight.

On the one hand, "right from the start it was a venture that would lead inexorably to death." On the other, he must admit a certain nobility to the venture: "There has to be a readiness to accept unknowns." The Andersons were rank novices.

Thanks to Smith's thoughtful, sympathetic prose, we get to know the adventurers, their struggles, hopes and exuberance.

WHEN WE were friends in the 1960s, Francis Brunn was the only juggler in the world to "put

up" 10 - count 'em, 10 - hoops. Just for the hell of it, he did it while dancing a snappy flamenco. heel clicks and all, on a 6-by-6 stage of the Lido in Paris.

Does that make him smart, or what? Michael Gelb and Tony Buzan say it does.

What jugglers achieve, they say, is a physical, psychological, even spiritual equilibrium, allowing them to learn and succeed.

It's called "relaxed concentration," a principle you can apply to the endeavor of your choice. The authors claim to have taught the method to such forces as AT&T, Du Pont, the US Army.

They have the endorsements to prove it, including that of author Roger van Oech, whose imprimatur bears repeating: "This wonderful book provides you with proven techniques to get your balls in the air - and keep them there."

WHOM UP a batch of pure delight. Simmer. Chop finely into words.

On the side, blend equal parts of whimsy, wit and wisdom. Mix. Garnish like crazy. Spike with an indecent amount of Caribbean hot sauce. Serve. Stand back. This is Chamoiseau's personal recipe, and if there's a tastier dish in all of folklore, let us know.

Chamoiseau, one of the last and surely one of the grandest of the old-fashioned storytellers, is a native of Martinique, an island colony of the French far too long. His tales are recalled from childhood, passed along from a time when life was harsh and imagination, gaudy, delicious



Henry VIII's variety of wives - dogged, cunning, unfaithful, meek, decent and colorless (Jane Seymour, right) - come to life in Karen Lindsey's 'Divorced, Beheaded, Survived.'

and malign, was just about the only escape from the alleged masters.

In the stories, colonists always get their comeuppance. Intros are disarming - "I saw this tale go by my hut in the small hours of a sunny night" - and Chamoiseau's language a marvel of unexpected connections.

Not a word goes astray in what have been called "stories of survival," but also, more aptly, "fairy tales with an attitude."

AS A novelist, Martinez is a damn fine mathematician (a Ph.D., as a matter of fact, now at Oxford). A pretty fair philosopher, too. An exegete he's not.

Granted, he's set himself a monumental task in a minimal space: a novel about pure thought. Gustavo Roderer, the young Argentine of the title, is a genius. His quest: nothing less than true knowledge, "not the quota of tolerable mind, but the logos that the devil and God safeguard together," the ultimate formula/philosophy that will explain all things.

Martinez, when he's not tossing about theses on some of history's more rarefied intellectuals, makes the acquisition of such knowledge seem frightening, dangerous. Surely to Roderer it is: He thinks himself to death.

The narrator himself is extremely bright, but with an intelligence that turns outward. Roderer, his high-school classmate, turns his brain - his soul - inward. He has absorbed the weightiest books and spends his time in solitary contemplation.

Roderer finds the truth, but conveniently for Martinez, he dies before he can explain it.

FOR THE first 120 pages of *The Gates*, protagonist Primo Thomas is as bored and alienated. So is the reader. This, presumably, is by design.

Wachtel's villain - a popular one in a progressively cynical world - is indifference, anomie, a vague but persistent malaise. These are difficult topics to deal with, to read about. In Primo Thomas's case, the epiphany is worth the wait.

Primo's father was a black doctor; his mother an Italian whose family has cut her off. Primo, 37, is divorced. After two years as an instructor in Boston, he returns to his native New York, where he teaches English to immigrants.

With a dozen other teachers, he goes to Nicaragua to tour educational facilities. The Sandinistas are trying to rebuild their country, post-Somoza (it's 1988). The Contras, with the help of the US military-industrial complex, are sabotaging their efforts. In Managua, Primo meets Angelita, the embodiment of individual responsibility, sacrifice, one-person-can-make-a-difference.

He is transformed. Back in New York, he determines to make his difference.

Wachtel, while sometimes stiffly introspective, is a fluid modern Aeschylus. There is enough light banter, moments of sheer wackiness, to effectively relieve the gloom. Yes, there is a moral, but one well worth investigating. (Los Angeles Times)

Support vanity: Hang a mirror on your wall

FIX IT YOURSELF

TAL KATZ

MIRROR, mirror, on the wall ... who's the simplest to install?

Regardless of what kind of mirror you have, you should have little trouble mounting it. There are three basic types of mirrors: framed; unframed, with holes or screws in the glass; and bare sheets of glass. Here is how to hang these vessels of vanity on regular or tiled walls.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

Drill (makdeha) and two masonry bits (makdehim), 3.5 millimeter and 6 mm.; screwdriver (mayreg); screws (boragim) and wall anchors (dibelim), and, if mounting a mirror with neither hooks nor holes, a set of four spring-loading mirror brackets (mahzikel mar'ot kftul'im).

DIRECTIONS

Framed mirrors usually come with a string or eye-hooks on the back.

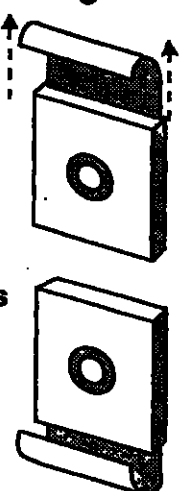
Though small mirrors can be hung on a nail, screws are preferable, since any degree of tipping away from the wall can distort the reflection.

When drilling into walls, it is always best to begin with a small masonry bit (3.5 mm.) at low speed, and to complete the hole with a larger masonry bit (6 mm.) at high speed. The hammer mode can be used if the wall is especially hard, but should never be used when drilling into ceramic tiles.

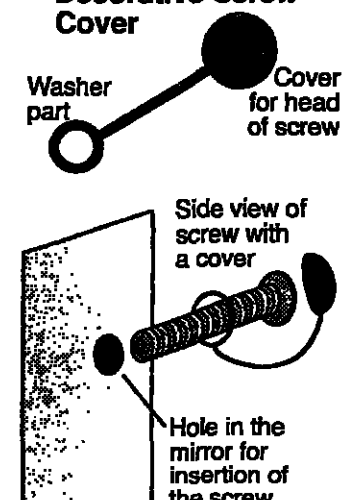
Before drilling into tiles, break the outer glaze by gently tapping a nail with a hammer until a tiny hole is visible. Then drill as above. When possible, drill between tiles to minimize tile damage.

If the framed mirror has two eye-hooks on the back, drill the

Pair of Springed Mirror Fasteners



Decorative Screw Cover



first hole, insert its anchor (dibet), attach the mirror, insert the screw through the eye and about halfway into the anchor, and then trace the second hole with a sharp pencil.

Afterwards, remove the screw and mirror, and drill the next hole. When inserting anchors into tiled walls, tap gently with the handle of the screwdriver until it is flush with the wall.

For an unframed mirror with two holes in the glass: After determining desired location, trace the first hole with a pencil onto the tile.

Drill and insert anchor as above. Align the hole in the mirror with the anchor, and insert the screw through the glass about halfway. Holding the other side of the mirror against the wall, trace the second hole.

Then remove the mirror, drill

the second hole, and insert the second anchor. Before installing the mirror, insert the screws into their anchors all the way and then unscrew them. This will facilitate insertion of the screws when hanging the mirror.

If it's hard to insert the screws, the screwdriver may slip and damage the mirror. For this kind of mirror, it is best to use cross-tipped screws, since the Phillips screwdriver is less likely to slip than a straight-edged screwdriver. Do not use force to tighten the screws to avoid cracking the mirror.

You can hide the screws behind plastic screw covers (kisum lebragim), which cost about NIS 4 for a set of 12. To use them, first thread the screw through the cover's accompanying washer and then through the mirror; then secure the screw into the wall and snap the cover onto the screw head.

PLAIN MIRRORS are best installed with two pairs of spring-loading brackets, costing about NIS 5 per pair. Each pair has a stationary bottom bracket, consisting of a square metal plate to be secured to the wall and a small curved trough that holds the mirror.

The other bracket looks similar but contains a spring so its trough can be pulled up and allowed to snap into place to secure the mirror from the top or side.

Hold the mirror against the wall where you plan to mount it (you may need help depending on how big it is) and draw a pencil line on the wall along the bottom edge of the mirror. Hold one bracket against the pencil mark and trace the hole in its center onto the wall.

Repeat for the second. (For best results, the brackets should be equidistant from the corners of the mirror).

Follow the instructions above

for drilling the holes. Insert the anchors into the holes, line up each bottom bracket with a hole, insert the screws through them and secure tightly. Place the mirror into the brackets' troughs. Lean the top edge of the mirror against the wall. Place the two top/side brackets (with springs) onto the top or on either side of the mirror. Draw a line along the edge of each fastener.

Remove the mirror. Mark 5 mm. below each pencil line if the brackets are to be on top, 5 mm. toward the middle if they are to be mounted on the sides. Hold the spring brackets against the lower line, and trace each hole onto the wall. Drill both holes, insert anchors, align the brackets and secure them with screws.

Place the bottom edge of the mirror onto the bottom brackets. Lean the top of the mirror against the top/side brackets, reach behind it to grasp the brackets and pull them up or out.

If you can't get a good grip on them, loop some string around the troughs and pull. When the mirror is against the wall, release the brackets so they snap into place.

If you have a question or can suggest simple solutions to annoying problems, write to: Fix It Yourself, POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1995

Dollar falls below 80 yen, then rebounds

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The dollar ended higher yesterday after falling to a new post-World War II low against the yen overnight amid growing concern about the fate of ongoing US-Japan automotive trade talks.

Dealers said aggressive dollar buying by the Bank of Japan overnight helped to lift the dollar off of its new low of 79.75 yen,

and the currency gained further during the North American session after a report on US trade showed that the US trade deficit narrowed in February.

By late New York trading, the dollar was at 81.25 yen, from 80.75 yen in New York late on Tuesday.

The dollar also received a big boost against the German mark

late in the New York session as a large US fund came in and bought dollars aggressively, dealers said.

But they were quick to point out that the large move up was likely exaggerated due to a lack of liquidity in the market.

In late New York trading, the dollar was sharply higher at 1.3705 marks, from 1.3528 Ger-

man marks late Tuesday.

Dealers said the dollar gained after the US Department of Commerce said the trade deficit contracted to \$9.0 billion in February, smaller than a revised shortfall of \$11.95b. in January.

Many were particularly encouraged by news that the US-Japan trade deficit fell 3.1 percent to \$4.71b.

But stalled US-Japan trade talks continue to captivate the markets, and dealers said one month's data would not be enough to reverse the downward trend of the dollar.

By late New York trading, the dollar was at 1.1320 Swiss francs, compared with 1.1150 francs, while the British pound eased to \$1.6100 from \$1.6125.

Rising exports shrink US trade gap

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Stronger foreign sales of aircraft helped shrink the US deficit on trade in goods and services nearly 25 percent to \$9.01 billion in February from \$11.95b. in January, the Commerce Department said yesterday.

Exports grew 2.4% to \$62.42b., while imports - made more costly by the plummeting value of the US dollar - dropped 2% to \$71.43b. A hotly controversial bilateral deficit with Japan fell for a fourth straight month.

The February deficit was significantly better than anticipated by Wall Street economists, who had forecast a higher \$10.2b. shortfall.

The weakening dollar is clearly having an impact by pushing import costs up while making American-made products cheap-

er for foreigners to buy. Commerce said the drop in imports during February was the sharpest since it started compiling the figures on the current basis more than two years ago in January 1992. Exports were the second highest for any month on record.

The US typically runs a surplus on its trade with other countries in services like travel and tourism that partly offsets big merchandise trade deficits.

In February, the merchandise deficit narrowed to \$14.20b. from \$16.85b. in January. The surplus on services increased to \$5.18b. from \$4.90b. in January.

The politically sensitive deficit on trade in goods with Japan fell 3.1% to \$4.71b. from \$4.86b. in January. It was the lowest monthly gap with Japan since May 1994.

Just say 'no' to pay hike requests

COMMENT

NEIL COHEN

"THEIR demands are outrageous and we won't pay them a penny... Their demands are totally unreasonable and there is no way that we can meet them... Their demands are unreasonable, we can't meet them, but we might be able to offer them something as a gesture of goodwill... This is a good deal for everyone."

Sound familiar? That was the standard Treasury text when it was negotiating with the nurses, the teachers, the university lecturers, the public employees and various other civil servants who took Treasury negotiators to the cleaners and were in no small part responsible for the last bout of inflation.

The script was a little different but the dance with the judges has been equally inept.

Granted, this time around it was the

Knesset Finance Committee which agreed to the pay rise, (40 percent according to the Justice Ministry, 70% according to the Treasury). But the finance minister seemed to wake up awfully late in the day to the deal's ramifications. The most dangerous of these is that other senior government employees whose pay is linked to that of the judges will seek equally generous wage increases and the payhikefest will begin all over again.

The route the Treasury is trying to take to avoid this is to sever the link between judges' pay and that of other civil servants.

Unfortunately, this seems rather disingenuous. The whole argument for the judges' pay hike is that one needs to attract high quality people to the bench. But doesn't one need high quality people running government companies, government legal departments, in medicine or in teaching?

So, the moment one argues a group is a "special" case, one leaves open the door for everyone else to argue the same thing. After all, garbage collectors perform a vital service. In fact, most people would probably manage more easily without judges than without garbage collectors.

Sadly, we are still not such a rich country that we can pay everyone what they want. If inflation is not to run riot, (and public sector workers are just as aware as the government that an election is looming), Shohat will have to learn to just say "no."

Ministry: Salary hike for judges only 40%

Jerusalem Post Staff

THE Justice Ministry yesterday said reports that judges have received salary increases of 70 percent were "factually mistaken."

The ministry said the Knesset Finance Committee granted the judges about a 40% salary increase - made up of a 15% wage increase plus other benefits regarding seniority, grade advancement, travel expenses and an annual sabbatical grant.

Earlier, on Israel Radio, Finance Minister Abraham Shohat reiterated his stance that the Knesset "made a serious mistake in the scope of the increase. I think the salaries of the judges needed to be increased somewhat but certainly not the way it was done in the Finance Committee."

He confirmed he has been called on to increase the salaries of other senior officials whose wages are linked to the judges.

These include government legal advisers, the army chief of general staff, the police inspector-general, and the heads of the Mossad and the General Security Service.

"I have said no in no uncertain terms [to these requests]," Shohat said, adding that the judges were a separate group numbering less than 400 people belonging to an independent arm of the government and therefore should be treated separately.

"I think we should unlink the salaries of the judges from those defined as 'parallel to judges,'" Shohat said. "These are a small group, but [granting it to them] could have an effect on others in a second wave. I see no reason for this practice to continue."

The radio reported that Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair said severing the linkage between the judges and the other senior officials would violate legislation.

Israel Phoenix Ins. reports 24% fall in annual net profits

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE Israel Phoenix Insurance Company reported a 24 percent drop in annual net profits to NIS 31.22 million from NIS 38.8m. in 1993.

The Phoenix group's consolidated results include the financial statements of the following subsidiaries - Hadar, Dolev, La Nationale, England's City Fire companies and Etra insurance companies.

Phoenix's contribution to the group's profits increased to NIS 17.9m. from NIS 5.5m., while the subsidiaries' contribution fell to NIS 13.3m. from NIS 33.3m.

The company said the insurance market was influenced by the volatility of the capital market and the fall in price of tradeable securities on the Tel Aviv

Stock Exchange.

The group's results include a one-time gain of NIS 8.4m. from the sale of an affiliated company and profits from the public offering of one of its subsidiaries.

The group reported a fall in profits from life insurance activities to NIS 88.06m. from NIS 124.07m. in 1993.

Total premiums from these activities increased 25.3 percent to NIS 1.22 billion.

The group reported profits of NIS 6.65m. from non-life insurance activities, compared with losses of NIS 8.85m. in 1993.

Total premiums from these activities increased to NIS 1.25b. from NIS 1.22b.

The group's total balance sheet grew to NIS 4.09b. from NIS 3.67b.

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WORLD MARKETS REPORT

DOLLARYEN - Last Friday's package from Japan failed to have any impact. The 75bps cut in the Official Discount Rate had been discounted, and the package was inadequate. The Japanese Government can go no further, given the weakness of its coalition, and has indicated that it is up to the Americans to make policy changes. There is little justification in the US domestic economy for a further US rate hike, as the first quarter growth rate has probably halved. The US would have to take fiscal measures to convince the markets to change their bearish stance on the dollar, but substantive steps are not anticipated.

BANK OF JAPAN INTERVENTION - The BoJ was reported to have intervened when the dollar reached a post-war low below 80. The only alternative to a significant change in US fiscal policy is unlimited, unsterilized intervention by the BoJ. Unsterilized intervention means monetary expansion, which could have a positive effect on Japan's two major economic problems, viz. weak domestic consumption and asset price deflation. The BoJ is unwilling to take such a step, because of long unsteady memories of asset inflation caused by monetary over-expansion.

67 MEETING - The 67th meeting on April 25 in Washington, and the dollar/yen problem will be high on the agenda. The seriousness of the situation should concentrate minds, and it is therefore possible that, unusually, something substantive may emerge.

US T-BONDS - T-bonds have largely decoupled from the dollar, and the long yield has been steady around 7.25-7.40%. There are few domestic market factors arising over the next few days.

WALL STREET - This market remains in need of a consolidation/correction before any further sustainable advances can be made. Early first quarter earnings reports appear to be fulfilling good expectations.

STERLING/DMARK - The weakness of the dollar on Wednesday pushed sterling below the DMG 16-2.25 range. Other bullish factors have been the likely battering of UK Government in the local elections, and the reduced pressure for further rate rises. Sterling is under-valued, and given higher values for the dollar, should recover.

UK GILTS - The long gilt future hit the long-term target of 104-00, but was stopped at 104-15. There is good support at 103-24.

UK EQUITIES - The FT-SE 100 index broke through resistance at 3175-3185 to peak at 3255. After retreating to be supported at 3190, the subsequent rally failed at 3220, now a resistance point. A break below 3150 would invalidate the current rally. Recent recommendations, ICI (ICLL, 745p) and Cuckoo Group (CKSNLL, 222p), have been performing well, and there are buyers on market setbacks.

ASIA-PACIFIC MARKETS - These are over-shadowed by the problems of the dollar/yen exchange rate. They are suffering from low volumes and general investor uncertainty.

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| US dollar (\$50,000) | 5.375 | 5.500 | 5.625 | |
| Pound sterling (£100,000) | 4.625 | 4.750 | 4.875 | |
| German mark (DM 200,000) | 3.125 | 3.250 | 3.375 | |
| Swiss franc (SF 200,000) | 2.250 | 2.375 | 2.500 | |
| Yen (10 million yen) | - | -0.125 | -0.125 | |

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

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| CHECKS AND TRANSFERS | | BANKNOTES | | Rep. Bank |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Buy | Sell | Buy | Sell | |
| Currency basket | 3.4593 | 3.5151 | 3.4593 | 3.4593 |
| U.S. dollar | 2.2554 | 2.2725 | 2.2554 | 2.2554 |
| German mark | 2.1358 | 2.1514 | 2.1358 | 2.1358 |
| Pound sterling | 4.7304 | 4.8067 | 4.7304 | 4.7304 |
| French franc | 0.0502 | 0.0519 | 0.0502 | 0.0502 |
| Japanese yen (100) | 3.6228 | 3.6520 | 3.6228 | 3.6228 |
| Dutch florin | 1.8259 | 1.8570 | 1.8259 | 1.8259 |
| Swiss franc | 2.6131 | 2.6525 | 2.6131 | 2.6131 |
| Swedish krona | 0.4018 | 0.4035 | 0.4018 | 0.4018 |
| Norwegian krona | 0.4775 | 0.4857 | 0.4775 | 0.4775 |
| Danish krone | 0.5465 | 0.5554 | 0.5465 | 0.5465 |
| Finland mark | 0.0641 | 0.0655 | 0.0641 | 0.0641 |
| Canadian dollar | 2.1803 | 2.1847 | 2.1803 | 2.1803 |
| Australian dollar | 2.1575 | 2.1823 | 2.1575 | 2.1575 |
| S. African rand | 0.0162 | 0.0224 | 0.0162 | 0.0162 |
| Belgian franc (10) | 1.0478 | 1.0648 | 1.0478 | 1.0478 |
| Austrian schilling (10) | 3.0844 | 3.1139 | 3.0844 | 3.0844 |
| Italian lire (1000) | 1.7190 | 1.7468 | 1.7190 | 1.7190 |
| Jordanian dinar | - | - | 4.18 | 4.5075 |
| Egyptian pound | - | - | 0.83 | 0.90 |
| ECU | 3.9407 | 4.0043 | - | 3.9740 |
| Irish punt | 4.5767 | 4.5554 | 4.5767 | 4.5767 |
| Spanish peseta (100) | 2.3754 | 2.4138 | 2.3754 | 2.3754 |

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.

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| Mark | NIS 2.1796 | +0.98% |

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New York market indexes

| Index | Last | Change |
|---------------|---------|--------|
| DJ Industrial | 4397.84 | +28.71 |
| DJ Transport | 1557.84 | +1.12 |
| DJ Comp | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| NASDAQ | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| NYSE | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| NYSE Transp | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| NYSE Comp | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| S&P 500 | 272.45 | +0.58 |
| S&P 100 | 524.4 | +0.57 |
| AMEX | 470.4 | +1.42 |

NYSE stocks

| Stock | Last | Change |
|-------|--------|--------|
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |

Other stock market indexes

| Index | Last | Change |
|--------------|---------|--------|
| FTSE 100 | 3720.1 | +12.4 |
| Tokyo Nikkei | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| Singapore | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| Hong Kong | 1552.84 | +1.12 |
| India | 1552.84 | +1.12 |

Israeli stocks in NY

| Stock | Last | Change |
|-------|--------|--------|
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |

INFLATION MARKETS

Dollar crossrates (US)

| Country | Rate | Change |
|---------|--------|---------|
| Japan | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Germany | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| France | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Italy | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| UK | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

Labor rates

| Country | Rate | Change |
|---------|--------|---------|
| Japan | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Germany | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| France | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Italy | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| UK | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

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US commodities

| Commodity | Last | Change |
|-----------|--------|---------|
| Corn | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Soybeans | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Wheat | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Oil | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

London commodities

| Commodity | Last | Change |
|-----------|--------|---------|
| Corn | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Soybeans | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Wheat | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Oil | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

Spot market metals (US)

| Metal | Last | Change |
|--------|--------|---------|
| Gold | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Silver | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Copper | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

New York metal futures

| Metal | Last | Change |
|--------|--------|---------|
| Gold | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Silver | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Copper | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

London metal futures

| Metal | Last | Change |
|--------|--------|---------|
| Gold | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Silver | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |
| Copper | 1.0000 | +0.0000 |

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

Multi-sided trading

| Stock | Price | Change |
|-------|--------|--------|
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |

Two-sided trading

| Stock | Price | Change |
|-------|--------|--------|
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |

PARALLEL LIST

| Stock | Price | Change |
|-------|--------|--------|
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |
| Amgen | 155.00 | +0.12 |

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Two-Sided Index increases 0.3%

RACHEL NEIMAN

Two-Sided index 166.29 +0.29%
Maof Index 167.85 +0.43%
Karam Index 132.67 -0.30%

The two trading week ended on a positive note yesterday, as the general market rose slightly to 151.95 on NIS 40 million turnover.

Traders were looking toward Sunday, when the Bank of Israel is expected to decide its interest rate policy.

It is hoped a change might lift the market out of its present slump. Trading was also affected by the dollar's fall the previous night.

The Two-Sided Index rose 0.29%, closing at 166.29 on NIS 28.8m. turnover.

Teva fell 0.25% on NIS 2.7m. turnover, while Koor was up 1.3% on NIS 2.36m. turnover.

Israel General Bank rose 3% and Danbar increased 4.5%. Abj rose 9.6%, completing a 68% rise for the week.

The Maof Index was up 0.43% to 167.85 on NIS 205.4m. volume of trade.

The Karam Index fell 0.30% to 132.67 on NIS 6.7m. turnover.

Tefen, Meitaviv and Ilim all rose 10%.

Trading on the general bond market was mixed, with CPI-linked bonds dipping 0.03% to 139.27 and dollar-linked bonds falling 0.29% to 138.70.

All in all, the week was characterized by a quiet optimism following last Friday's publication of March's CPI Index.

The market rose 3% on Sunday, receding slightly for the next two days and then pressed on.

The Two-Sided Index rose 1.45% for the week, the Maof went up 1.47% and the Karam increased 0.53%.

Turnovers were kept low during the holiday week, as trading ended at 2:00 p.m.

FTSE Index closes 24.4 points lower

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - Blue chips closed near the day's lowest levels as the market was hit by fresh concerns over whether weakness of sterling could prompt an early interest rate increase, dealers said.

The FTSE 100 index of leading UK shares closed down 24.4 points at 3,170.1, just above its session low of 3,167.7.

FRANKFURT - Shares closed floor trade weaker but off their lows after the dollar recovered some ground against the mark and Daimler-Benz AG's stock staged a partial technical rebound.

The 30-share DAX Index closed the floor session 14.25 points lower at 1,951.04, up from an early low of 1,938.74 caused by fears the dollar would weaken further.

In post-bourse trade the index fell 10.74 to 1,943.88.

PARIS - French shares finished sharply higher as foreign investors gambled on a continuation of weakness in the franc, spurred by comments by presidential frontrunner Jacques Chirac.

The CAC-40 Index closed up 19.20 at 1,874.90.

ZURICH - Swiss shares fell by more than one percent in quiet trade dragged down by futures-related selling. The weak dollar weighed on sentiment.

The broad SPI closed down 15.68 points at 1,644.91.

TOKYO - Stocks shrugged off the yen's relentless advance as arbitrage-linked buying induced by higher futures overcame selling pressure.

The Nikkei average initially fell as low as 15,976.86, but index-linked buying helped the index post gains.

HONG KONG - Shares ended modestly down on thin volume as cautious investors stayed out of the market.

The blue chip Hang Seng index was down 63.11 points, or 0.78%, at 8,581.86.

Preliminary turnover was HK\$1.61 billion, compared with Tuesday's adjusted HK\$2.24b.

The market traded sideways throughout the day, below the opening level of 8,629.07.

SYDNEY - The share market closed a touch weaker, as late bargain hunting lifted shares off their lows - despite Wall Street's fall on Tuesday.

The All Ordinaries Index closed 0.1 point down at 2,040.4, well off its intra-day low of 2,027.1.

Dealers said a number of blue chip issues - including BHP, CRA and News Corp. - attracted late buying support which had the effect of lifting the whole market.

JOHANNESBURG - South African shares closed higher on the bullish undertone generated by a strong bullion price.

A dealer said higher trading volumes had been restricted to gold shares and blue-chip industrials and the buoyant tone was expected to continue tomorrow.

The overall index added 34.4 points to 5,439.3, the industrial index was 14.5 points up at 6,694.0 and the gold index 44 up at 1,558.9.

Blue-chip stocks close sharply higher

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Blue-chip stocks rallied yesterday as a rebound in the dollar eased worries about the inflationary impact of a weak currency.

Based on early and unofficial data, the Dow Jones industrial average ended with a gain of 28.36 points at 4,207.49 - just below the record high of 4,208.18 set on April 13.

In the broader market, declining issues led advances by a small margin on heavy trading of more than 380 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

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| YEN | 120.9813 | 0.548291 | 71.7833 | — |
| SFR | 0.281823 | 0.127779 | 16.7179 | 0.252592 |
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AC Milan, Ajax advance to Cup final

LONDON (AP) - Having beaten AC Milan twice earlier in the campaign, Ajax of Amsterdam has to do it again in the European Champions Cup final after both soccer giants made it through yesterday.

Finnish striker Jari Litmanen scored twice as Ajax overpowered injury-hit Bayern Munich 5-2 in one semifinal in Amsterdam, the first four goals for the Dutch team coming in the first 47 minutes.

And Dejan Savicevic, a Montenegrin who started for Milan in last season's Champions Cup final triumph over Barcelona, scored twice as the Italians, aiming for a record-tying sixth title, downed Paris Saint Germain 2-0

for a 3-0 aggregate victory.

Ajax twice downed Milan 2-0 during the group stages of the competition and should be favored to win the final in Vienna May 24.

But the thought of that sixth title, matching the 29-year-old record of Real Madrid, will motivate the Italians, who have had to overcome a series of hurdles to get to the final.

It was punished by UEFA, soccer's European governing body, after a bottle, thrown by a fan during a 3-0 victory over Casino Salzburg, hit the Austrian team's goalkeeper. UEFA took the two points away and ordered the club to play its next two home games away from its famous stadium lo-

cated at San Siro.

Ajax produced a solid defensive performance to score a 0-0 tie in Munich in the first leg but opened up in the home leg, unleashing its talented strikers.

Litmanen struck after 11 minutes and, although Marcel Witczek replied for Bayern in the 36th, Ajax took hold of the game with goals from Nigerian forward Finidi George (41st minute), Ronald de Boer (45th) and Litmanen (47th).

Mehmet Scholl converted a penalty in the 76th minute to cut the lead to 4-2 but Marc Overmars netted a fifth for Ajax two minutes from the end.

Bayern, suffering from the loss of defender Lothar Matthaeus

and strikers Jean-Pierre Papin and Emil Kostadinov, was swept aside by the impressive, young Ajax team.

Savicevic gave Milan the lead after 21 minutes and then made sure of his team's place in the final with a second from a pass by French midfielder Marcel Desailly, in the 68th.

The only problem then for Milan was that 10 of its players, having been shown the yellow card in previous Champions Cup games, were in danger of missing the final if they saw another. They pulled plenty of players back in defense and took no chances.

Milan won the title in 1963, 1969, '89, '90 and last season.

Maccabi takes 2-0 lead

RICHARD ZAACKS

passes, racking up 15 of the team's total points.

Then Jamchee woke up and scored a hot 14 points (including three 3-pointers) in a seven-minute stretch to cut Galil's lead to 46-42 at halftime.

In the second half, Dozier and Curcic traded scores with Galil nursing a 3-point lead (53-50). Then Jamchee cooled off, while Leaf and Amir Muktari took turns building the hosts' lead to 62-54 with 12 minutes to go.

But Maccabi kept close until, with five minutes to the end, Curcic led the team on a 9-point binge which brought Maccabi up

by a 67-66 margin.

With Dozier and Erez Hazan lifting Galil to 70-69, life got hard for Maccabi. But Guy Goodes stepped in to fill the shoes of Jamchee, who fouled out, and with a 3-pointer at 2:20 to go, gave Maccabi the lead for good.

Two Galil turnovers and a timely blocked shot by Henefeld on Hazan put the icing on the cake and Maccabi goes back to Yad Eliyahu in a seemingly invincible position.

For Maccabi, Jamchee scored 29, Curcic 25, Goodes 8 and Henefeld 7.

Galil was led by Dozier's 21, Darren Daye's 18 and Hazan's 15.

Montana calls it a career

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - Legendary quarterback Joe Montana, who led the San Francisco 49ers to four Super Bowl championships, announced Tuesday that he is retiring from professional football.

"I will be retiring from the NFL," Montana told a packed news conference, ending months of speculation that he would hang up his helmet.

Montana, considered the best quarterback ever to play the game, said he has had 16 wonderful years, most of them in San Francisco.

"That day happens when you wake up and you realize it was not so much a game anymore and it really felt like a job," Montana said.

Montana denied rumors that his wife Jennifer had prompted his decision to retire or that he was calling it quits because of a knee injury or because he was unhappy playing with the Kansas City Chiefs - the team he had played with for the last two years.

"I have had a lot of great experiences. But it's time to pull out the golf clubs," said the 38-year-old Montana.

Montana did not say what his future plans were. He said, however, that he has been entertaining offers from television networks to do something "away from ordinary broadcasting."

Montana announced his retirement at a public rally attended by thousands of fans in downtown San Francisco.



JOE SAYS IT'S SO - Joe Montana smiles at his retirement party. 49ers' owner Eddie DeBartolo is at right. (AP)

Morris retires after 17 years on the mound

PLANT CITY (AP) - Jack Morris, one of the best big-game pitchers in baseball in the past two decades, retired rather than stick around as something less than the best.

Morris, who turns 40 next month, showed up for training camp trying to win a spot in the Cincinnati Reds' rotation. After a week of throwing and one poor exhibition outing, he decided he could no longer be a premier pitcher.

"I guess I always told myself if you can't play at that level anymore, you've got to be honest with yourself. I don't want to be second-best, and I think I would have been."

During his 17-year career, he helped three teams win World Series titles - Detroit in 1984, Minnesota in 1991 and Toronto in 1992. He was MVP of the 1991 Series, when he pitched 10 shut-out innings to beat Atlanta 1-0 in the seventh game.

"He had no fears," Detroit manager Sparky Anderson said Tuesday before an exhibition against the Reds. "I don't know if it was no sense or no fear, but he never worried about anything."

Retirement came after two tough years for Morris. He was 7-12 with a 6.19 ERA in 1993 for Toronto, which let him go as a free agent. He signed with Cleveland for a \$350,000 base salary and went 10-6 last year with a 5.60 ERA.

Payton's 28 leads Sonics; Portland backs into playoffs

NEW YORK (AP) - Seattle cleared one psychological hurdle on the way to the NBA playoffs.

The Los Angeles Lakers, a potential first-round playoff opponent for the SuperSonics, had beaten them in four games this season. On Tuesday night, Seattle scored a decisive victory, 113-97.

"There was no message to be sent," guard Gary Payton said. "We were just playing. We're looking forward to playing anybody in the playoffs, but we ain't worried about the playoffs right now."

The Portland Trail Blazers, meanwhile, weren't worried about the playoffs, either. Some players mistakenly thought they already had a postseason berth going into their game at Golden State.

"We were in, weren't we?" guard Rod Strickland said after a 103-102 loss to the Warriors.

Actually, Portland got in by virtue of Sacramento's 111-101 loss at Phoenix.

The Sonics built a 37-point lead in the third quarter and outbounded the Lakers 47-32.

Payton led Seattle, which remained a half-game behind Phoenix in the Pacific Division, with 28 points despite playing with a broken finger on his left - non-shooting - hand. Shawn Kemp and Ervin Johnson each had 14 rebounds in the Sonics' 17th victory in 21 games.

Anthony Peeler scored 18 points for the Lakers, who didn't cut their second-half deficit below 20 until the final two minutes.

Warriors 103, Trail Blazers 102

Portland clinched a playoff berth for the 13th straight season despite falling at Golden State.

The Trail Blazers had two chances to win down the stretch. Strickland's jumper with five seconds left was rebounded by the Warriors' Chris Mullin. After Ryan Lorthridge missed two free throws for Golden State, Portland got the ball back with 1.2 seconds left, but Otis Thorpe's inbound pass was intercepted at halfcourt.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

| | W | L | Pct. | GB |
|--------------|----|----|------|----|
| *Orlando | 56 | 23 | .709 | - |
| *New York | 52 | 27 | .658 | 4 |
| Boston | 35 | 44 | .443 | 21 |
| Miami | 31 | 48 | .392 | 25 |
| New Jersey | 28 | 51 | .354 | 28 |
| Philadelphia | 23 | 56 | .291 | 33 |
| Washington | 19 | 60 | .241 | 37 |

Central Division

| | W | L | Pct. | GB |
|------------|----|----|------|----|
| *Indiana | 50 | 29 | .633 | - |
| *Charlotte | 49 | 30 | .620 | 1 |
| *Chicago | 45 | 34 | .570 | 5 |
| *Cleveland | 41 | 38 | .519 | 9 |
| *Atlanta | 40 | 39 | .506 | 10 |
| Memphis | 32 | 47 | .405 | 18 |
| Detroit | 28 | 51 | .354 | 22 |

TUESDAY'S RESULTS:

Detroit 85, Cleveland 76

Utah 113, Minnesota 94

San Antonio 107, Denver 96

Dallas 104, L.A. Clippers 91

Phoenix 111, Sacramento 101

Seattle 113, L.A. Lakers 97

Golden State 103, Portland 102



BATTLE UNDER THE BOARDS - Jazz's Adam Keefe and Timberwolves' Christian Laettner battle for a rebound. (AP)

Mullin had 28 points and Lorthridge 18 for the Warriors.

Strickland had 15 points and 14 assists for Portland.

Jazz 113, Timberwolves 94

Utah increased its team record for road victories to 26 by beating Minnesota.

Karl Malone scored 32 points to lead Utah to its fourth straight win, and David Benoit added 22 points on 9-for-12 shooting.

Minnesota got 18 points from Isiah Rider and 17 from Tom Gugliotta, but lost for the 11th time in 13 games.

Suns 111, Kings 101

Phoenix continued its late-season surge with a win over Sacramento, which saw its playoff chances dim with a third straight loss.

Charles Barkley had 28 points and

Wayman Tisdale 18 as the Suns won for the sixth time in seven games.

The loss prevented the Kings, who have not made the playoffs since 1985-86, from tying Denver for the Western Conference's eighth playoff spot.

Springs 107, Nuggets 96

San Antonio moved within one win of clinching the NBA's best record with a victory over Denver, a likely first-round playoff opponent.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

| | W | L | Pct. | GB |
|--------------|----|----|------|----|
| *San Antonio | 59 | 20 | .747 | - |
| *Utah | 57 | 22 | .722 | 2 |
| *Denver | 47 | 32 | .595 | 12 |
| Dallas | 38 | 41 | .481 | 21 |
| Detroit | 36 | 43 | .456 | 23 |
| Minnesota | 21 | 58 | .266 | 38 |

Pacific Division

| | W | L | Pct. | GB |
|---------------|----|----|------|------|
| *Phoenix | 57 | 23 | .713 | - |
| *Seattle | 56 | 24 | .703 | 1 |
| *L.A. Lakers | 48 | 32 | .600 | 9 |
| *Portland | 41 | 39 | .519 | 15.5 |
| Sacramento | 37 | 42 | .468 | 18.5 |
| Golden State | 26 | 53 | .329 | 30.5 |
| L.A. Clippers | 16 | 64 | .200 | 41 |

*clinched conference title

*clinched playoff berth

Whalers pass Sabres in playoff hunt

NEW YORK (AP) - With seven games to go in the regular season, the Hartford Whalers have matters in their own hands.

"The biggest thing is we have control of our own destiny," Hartford goalie Sean Burke said after the Whalers edged the Buffalo Sabres 2-1 Tuesday night.

The victory gave the Whalers 41 points, the same as the Washington Capitals and one point more than the Sabres. The prize is the eighth and final playoff spot in the NHL's Eastern Conference race.

After losing for the fifth time in six games, Buffalo is one point ahead of the defending Stanley Cup champion New York Rangers.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|----------------|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Philadelphia | 24 | 13 | 4 | 52 | 134 | 114 |
| New Jersey | 22 | 15 | 7 | 47 | 119 | 105 |
| Washington | 17 | 17 | 7 | 41 | 104 | 101 |
| N.Y. Rangers | 18 | 20 | 3 | 39 | 114 | 111 |
| Tampa Bay | 18 | 22 | 3 | 39 | 104 | 116 |
| Florida | 15 | 20 | 5 | 35 | 94 | 108 |
| N.Y. Islanders | 13 | 23 | 5 | 31 | 108 | 136 |

Northwest Division

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|-------------|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| *Quebec | 28 | 10 | 4 | 60 | 192 | 118 |
| *Pittsburgh | 27 | 12 | 2 | 56 | 182 | 134 |
| Boston | 20 | 18 | 3 | 43 | 119 | 109 |
| Hartford | 18 | 18 | 5 | 41 | 112 | 116 |
| Buffalo | 17 | 17 | 6 | 40 | 105 | 100 |
| Montreal | 16 | 20 | 5 | 37 | 109 | 132 |
| Ottawa | 4 | 30 | 5 | 13 | 84 | 143 |

ers, who lost to Pittsburgh 6-5 Tuesday night. Besides the Whalers, the Capitals and Rangers also each have seven games remaining, while the Sabres have eight.

The Pittsburgh Penguins clinched a playoff berth for a fifth consecutive season by edging the New York Rangers 6-5.

Penguins 6, Rangers 5

Ron Francis' second goal of the game late in the third period lifted Pittsburgh over the visiting Rangers and clinched a playoff spot for the Penguins.

The Rangers lost despite a five-assist performance by defenseman Brian Leetch, which tied a team record, and four assists by Mark Messier.

The Rangers, who had their three-game winning streak snapped, their longest of the season, have lost their last six games in Pittsburgh since November 1992.

Islanders 5, Nordiques 2

Tumany Sola stopped 40 shots for his first NHL victory and Marty McInnis and Zigmund Palffy each had a goal and assist as New York snapped a six-game home winless streak.

TUESDAY'S RESULTS:

Pittsburgh 6, NY Rangers 5

Hartford 2, Buffalo 1

NY Islanders 5, Quebec 2

Tampa Bay 3, New Jersey 2

Philadelphia 3, Florida 1

St. Louis 4, Vancouver 1

Derek King, Ray Ferraro and Kirk Muller all had first-period goals for the Islanders, who had 38 shots on losing goalie Stephane Fleet. The deficit was too big a hill for Quebec to climb.

The loss snapped a five-game unbeaten streak for the Nordiques, but they still retain their top ranking in the Eastern Conference. It was only the third Islanders win over the Nordiques in their last 11 meetings (3-8-0).

Lightning 3, Devils 2

Roman Hamrlik scored his 12th goal, best among NHL defencemen, and rookie Cory Cross scored his first NHL goal as Tampa Bay kept its slim playoff hopes alive by edging visiting New Jersey.

Tampa Bay improved to 16-22-3, good for the 11th spot in the eastern Conference. It was the third victory in nine games for the Lightning.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|------------|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| *Detroit | 29 | 8 | 3 | 61 | 150 | 98 |
| *St. Louis | 24 | 12 | 3 | 51 | 149 | 111 |
| Toronto | 18 | 16 | 7 | 43 | 153 | 120 |
| Chicago | 19 | 18 | 3 | 41 | 150 | 122 |
| Dallas | 15 | 19 | 7 | 37 | 112 | 104 |
| Winnipeg | 13 | 21 | 6 | 32 | 135 | 152 |

Pacific Division

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|-------------|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| *Calgary | 22 | 15 | 5 | 49 | 146 | 118 |
| Vancouver | 15 | 16 | 10 | 40 | 126 | 128 |
| San Jose | 12 | 22 | 2 | 26 | 103 | 129 |
| Los Angeles | 13 | 20 | 7 | 33 | 127 | 156 |
| Anaheim | 14 | 22 | 4 | 32 | 102 | 130 |
| Edmonton | 14 | 23 | 3 | 31 | 118 | 153 |

*clinched playoff berth

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Police to probe financing of Kessar's ads

MICHAEL YUDLEMAN and BILL HUTMAN

A HISTADRUT comptroller report concerning allegedly illegal transactions by former secretary-general Yisrael Kessar in 1992 is to be transferred to the police next week.

Police are to decide Sunday when to summon Transport Minister Kessar, his successor, former Histadrut chairman Haim Haberfeld, and MK Avi Yehzekel for questioning in connection with the Histadrut fraud case, police sources said yesterday.

The report, completed this week by Nir Avnon, comptroller of the Histadrut's Education and Culture Enterprises, alleges that in 1992 Kessar used Histadrut funds to finance thank-you ads to party activists after his primary campaign for Labor Party leadership. NIS 32,000 worth of ads were published in nine newspapers after Kessar lost the primary.

According to Avnon's findings, the ads were ordered from the Mesarim ad agency and paid for by the Histadrut's media and information section.

Although Kessar's signature was not found on any of the invoices, it is believed that Kessar was involved because the ads were phrased as a direct message from him to Labor Party activists.

Histadrut sources yesterday criticized "a certain Histadrut senior official" for leaking the report to the press before it was presented to police or the Histadrut's legal adviser.

The probe into other Histadrut financial irregularities so far indicates that invoices intended for Kessar's and MK Avi Yehzekel's primary campaigns were canceled, and instead fictitious invoices were made out to other Histadrut departments. Thus, the expenses were to have been covered by the Histadrut, rather than the candidates themselves or the party.

Histadrut sources said they believed the investigation of Kessar, Yehzekel and Haberfeld would not take place until the police complete their investigation of all the minor activists and officials.

The investigating team is scheduled to meet Sunday to review the case, police sources said.

Much evidence has already been gathered from Histadrut documents and those already questioned against Kessar, Haberfeld, and Yehzekel, according to the sources.

At the meeting Sunday, decisions will be made on how to move forward with the investigation towards a quick completion, they said.

Newspaper paid wiretapper to reveal deal with Nimrod

RAINE MARCUS

CONVICTED wiretapper Hani Mizaki has been offered a large sum of money to disclose an alleged agreement he made with companies owned by Ofer and Ya'acov Nimrod to implicate others in bugging offenses.

Mizaki, a former private investigator who is serving a two-year sentence for illegal wiretapping, was offered the money by a newspaper to disclose the agreement and discredit the Nimrod's companies, Ma'ariv and Hachsharot Hayishuv.

Over a month ago Mizaki was paid by interested parties to implicate security company owner David Spector, Nisko shareholder Asher Friedberg, and private investigators Rafi Friedan and Micha Rotem

in the tapping of the phones of Elco owner Gershon Zelkind. The phones in Zelkind's Savyon home were allegedly tapped in 1994 from Spector's adjacent backyard. Spector is a former employee of Yediot Aharonot.

In return for his testimony, police investigating the still-unresolved media wiretapping case promised Mizaki they would recommend to the district attorney that he receive a concurrent sentence for his role in the Zelkind affair. No charges have yet been brought.

Mizaki's payoff of tens of thousands of shekels from the Nimrod's companies was made directly into his bank account.



Dachau survivors Rebecca Levitan (Left) and Etta Goz embrace as they meet this week for the first time since their liberation. The reunion in Tel Aviv took place at the international 50th anniversary reunion of survivors from the Landsberg-Kaufing labor camp, part of the Dachau complex. (AP)

Weizman battles litter with his own hands

LIAT COLLINS

SITES are usually cleaned before the president visits, but Ezer Weizman helped in the clean-up operation along the Israel Trail yesterday, saying he wanted to emphasize the importance of keeping the country litter-free.

Weizman opened the trail after attending the traditional Latrun March in which thousands of Armor Corps soldiers and citizens participated.

The Israel Trail is a continuous path for pedestrians and hikers crossing the country from Tel Hai to Eilat. It covers some 750 km.

of varied landscape and terrain and has been mapped by the Israel Trails Committee, under the auspices of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel and other conservation and tourism bodies. It has taken 10 years to construct although in small sections the path is temporary or incomplete due to road construction or other development.

SPNI leaders are calling it "the Green response to the Trans-Israel Highway (Road No. 6)".

"We hope that Israelis will travel along this route and enjoy it for many years to come," said SPNI founder Azaria Alon.

The trail is divided into 80 sections for day walks with maps and information points placed between them. So far 14 stations have been erected.

Although most of the trail is suitable for all the family there are some sections listed as "challenging." A series of 20 detailed maps marking various routes, sites and landmarks is being produced.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vandals deface Bulgarian synagogue

Vandals sprayed antisemitic slogans and swastikas on the walls of a Sofia synagogue and a Jewish primary school, a Bulgarian Jewish leader said on Wednesday. Eddie Schwartz, chairman of the Jewish Organization in Bulgaria, said the attack showed that neo-Nazi groups existed. The slogans included "Jews out" and "Bulgaria for Bulgarians."

Reuters

Yoram Skouri's murderer sentenced to life

The Nablus Military Court yesterday sentenced Mansur Riyan, convicted of murdering Yoram Skouri last July 1, to life imprisonment plus 10 years. Riyan, of Karawat Bani Hasan, broke into the home of Yoram and Hanna Skouri in Beit Netafem and stabbed the two. Yoram died a month later.

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis Chance draw, the lucky cards were: 10 of spades, king of hearts, nine of diamonds, king of clubs.

Vanunu complains to press: Not fair to treat me 'as a spy'

Jerusalem Post Staff

MORDECHAI Vanunu, serving an 18-year sentence for revealing Israel's nuclear secrets, complained in a letter published in Ma'ariv yesterday that he is being portrayed unfairly as a spy.

Vanunu said the General Security Service is trying to discredit him. "It's time you stopped calling me the 'nuclear spy,'" Vanunu wrote in the letter, sections of which were deleted by the military censor.

"I was not a spy and I didn't work for any intelligence service," Vanunu wrote. "Even though the court convicted me of high treason this cannot change the fact that I was not a spy."

"I was gravely punished in order to silence me and to shut me up," Vanunu added. "The General Security Service and its psychologists decided to turn me into a spy and to punish me severely to hush up the

whole matter."

Based on Vanunu's information, including photographs of Dimona, The Sunday Times of London wrote in 1986 that Israel had made up to 100 nuclear bombs, or the world's sixth largest arsenal. Recent foreign reports said Israel may have up to 300 nuclear weapons.

Meretz MK Dedi Zucker yesterday criticized the conditions of Vanunu's imprisonment at Ashkelon Prison. "There is no country in the free world that is ready to keep a prisoner in complete isolation from the world during eight years," Zucker told Army Radio. "In my eyes, this is insufferable."

Prisons Authority spokesman

Moshe Malul said Vanunu had access to television, books and radio, and that his family and attorney could visit. Malul said Vanunu receives and writes letters, but that like all other inmates, he has to submit them to a censor.

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